

GoodFood

MIDDLE EAST

SUPER SALADS

NEW IDEAS TO TOSS UP

SCHOOL'S IN! 25 lunchbox recipes

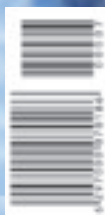
Time for a *treat*
Ice cream sundaes
everyone will love!

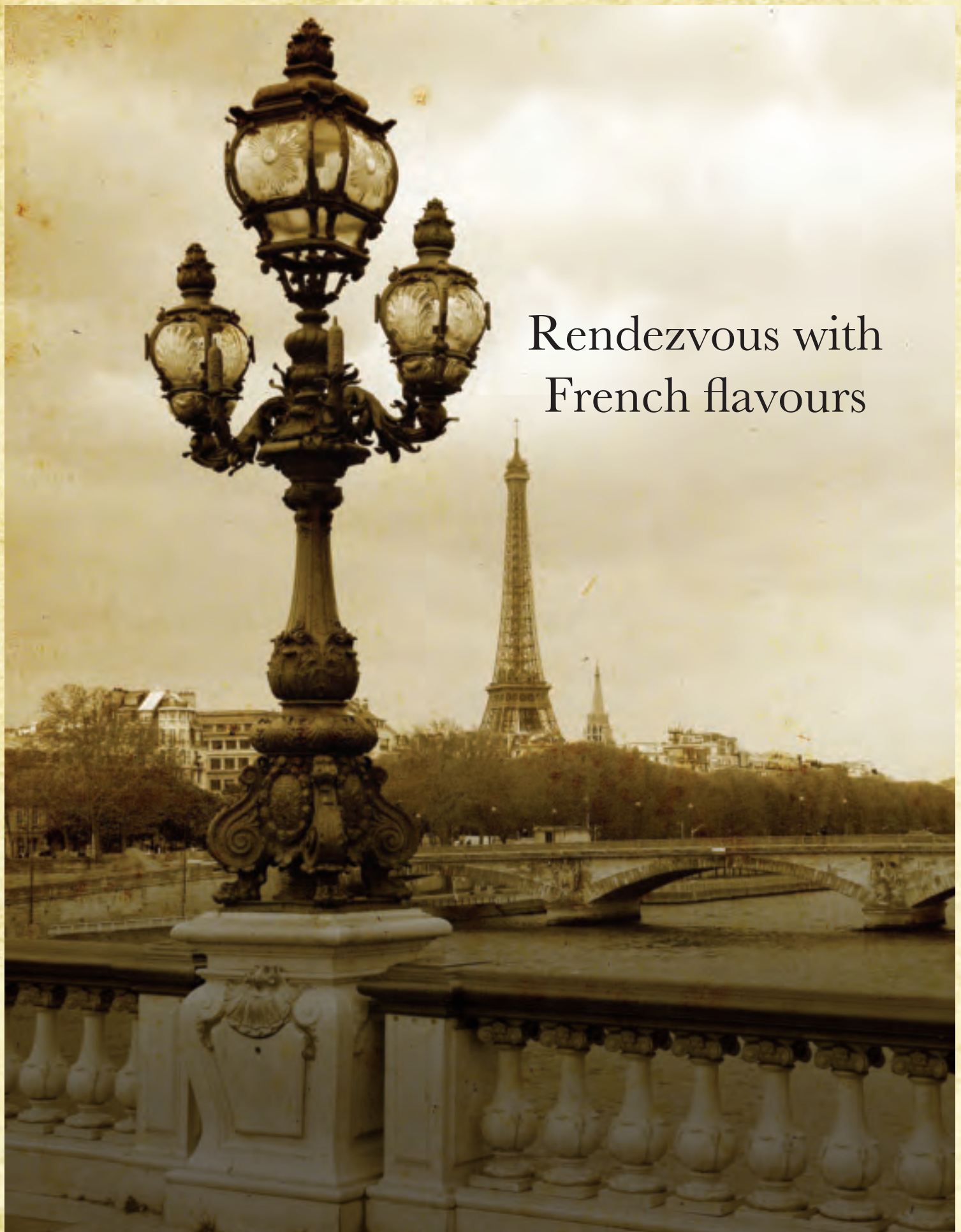
MIDDLE EASTERN MAESTRO

Greg Malouf tells us why
he now calls Dubai home

Inside:

- ✦ How to joint a chicken
- ✦ Mediterranean-style menus for friends





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PRINTED BY

Emirates Printing Press LLC, Dubai

PUBLISHED BY



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Group Office, Dubai Media City
Building 4, Office G08, Dubai, UAE

A publication licensed by IMPZ

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BBC Worldwide Magazines Unit:

BBC Good Food Magazine is owned by BBC Worldwide and produced on its behalf by Immediate Media Company Limited. BBC Worldwide's profits are returned to the BBC and help fund new BBC programmes.

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Editor's photograph shot at STU WILLIAMSON PHOTOGRAPHY (04-348 8527) | Makeup by CLARINS

Welcome!



My two-year old nephew has never eaten chocolate. My sister wants to keep him away from something that could potentially become addictive for as long as possible, but she does fill his days with plenty of other tasty, mostly organic, and cleverly thought out healthy dishes. And I know how much of a mission it is to get him to even eat all these delicious meals that I would LOVE to have someone prepare for me! On good days, he'll eat it all, but on bad days? She's lucky if he gets through a treat biscuit or two, and poppadum (which he's fascinated with)!

So, although I can't claim to have any first-hand experience with fussy eaters, I do know how much of a challenge they can be. Which makes me believe that anyone who manages to bring up a healthy person following a more or less balanced diet, deserves a gold star.

And this month, as the focus shifts to those little people heading back to schools (or into one for the first time), we've tried to do our bit in helping all mums (and dads) overcome some of those challenges. There's a week's worth of simple, sandwich-free lunchbox recipes in *Easy schooldays* (p42); useful advice and lunch ideas for kids of all ages as well as you (*Healthy lunchboxes*, p36); and most importantly, a look at what school canteens can do to improve the quality of food our children are eating in *Food lessons*, p70.

Two of the most important lessons I think we can take away from this feature are – get children involved and interested in food, that will make them so much more amenable to eating well; and, it's absolutely fine to indulge every now and then. We've taken care of both with our *Cooking with kids* feature on p60, and a *Month of sundaes*, p62, which brings back fond childhood memories of tucking into an indulgent ice cream sundae. I think we should all allow ourselves these little treats every now and then, they go a long way in creating happiness.

It's definitely going to be a busy month, make sure it's a happy one too!

Sudeshna

Editor's picks

◆ Soups make an excellent packed lunch, and they will travel well in these BPA-free cups, p13



◆ I know a 5-year-old can make it, but that's not stopping me from cooking up this simple chicken satay! p60



◆ I can't wait to try out Greg Malouf's cuisine when he opens his new restaurant in Dubai, p78



THE 2014 BBC GOOD FOOD ME AWARDS Nominations closing September 30.



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Contents



*STARTERS

8 YOUR SAY

Write in to us with your views and comments.

10 FOODIE FILE

All the latest food news, trends and happenings.

13 AISLE FILE

Go shopping for kitchen gadgets, and gorgeous home décor.

14 HERE TO HELP

Expert answers for your cooking questions.

17 CULINA-READS

Cookbooks, TV shows and app reviews.

18 TRIED AND TASTED: MODERN JAPANESE

We review two of the city's top tables.

20 FLAVOURS OF THE MONTH

The best restaurant promotions and offers this month.

22 DOHA DIARIES

The latest in Doha's dining scene.

33



*HOME COOKING

BACK
to
SCHOOL

28 MAKE IT TONIGHT

Weeknight suppers made interesting yet super easy.

33 LOW-CAL LUNCHES

Tasty lunch options you can relish guilt-free.

36 PACK A HEALTHY LUNCHBOX

Age-appropriate lunches for everyone in the family.

42 EASY SCHOOLDAYS!

Forget boring sandwiches, these creative lunchbox recipes will see you through the school season.

46 WELL DRESSED!

Satisfying salads bursting with fresh flavours.

51 KITCHEN NOTES

Essential knowhow for home chefs.

52 FLAVOURS OF THE MED

Simple, seasonal Mediterranean dishes that are sure to be crowd-pleasers.

36



58 CHEF SKILLS: LEARN TO JOINT A CHICKEN

Don't buy portions next time, get a whole chicken and get more out of it.

60 COOKING WITH KIDS: CHICKEN SATAY

Get the children to help make this yummy dish.

62 A MONTH OF SUNDAES

Everyone loves this indulgent dessert.

90



*GOURMET LIFESTYLE

70



70 FOOD LESSONS

Healthy eating may begin at home, but it needs to be perpetrated in schools too.

75 THE MILK DEBATE

Two nutritionists weigh out the pros and cons of drinking milk.

76 3'S A TREND: NORTH AMERICAN BREAKFAST JOINTS

We take a look at a new foodie trend in town.

78 THE INTERPRETER OF RECIPES

We catch up with Aussie celebrity chef Greg Malouf, ahead of his Dubai restaurant opening.

82 MY KITCHEN: MITCH TONKS

Explore this British chef's cooking hub.

84 FOOD SAFARI: IRAQ

Discover the lesser known cuisine and culture of this Arabian country.

89 TASTE OF THE WORLD

Travel news and global gastronomy.

90 A GASTRO-GUIDE TO WARSAW

The Polish capital is emerging as an interesting destination for foodies.

96 MEET THE BLOGGER

Get to know the face behind the food blog you've been savouring.

COMPETITIONS & OFFERS



81 A weekend break at Eastern Mangroves Hotel and Spa by Anantara.

88 A getaway at Fairmont The Palm.

94 Dining vouchers for UAE restaurants.

Our recipe descriptions

V Suitable for vegetarians

☞ You can freeze it

❄ Not suitable for freezing

Easy Simple recipes even beginners can make

A little effort These require a bit more skill and confidence – such as making pastry

More of a challenge Recipes aimed at experienced cooks

Low fat 12g or less per portion

Low cal 500 calories or less per main.

Superhealthy Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C, or counts at least one portion of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg.

Good for you Low in saturated fat, low in salt.

Heart healthy Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids

1 of 5-a-day The number of portions of fruit and/or veg contained in a serving

Vit C Iron Omega-3 Calcium Folate Fibre

Indicating recipes that are good sources of useful nutrients

GLUTEN FREE Indicates a recipe is free from gluten

Some recipes contain pork & alcohol. These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for these symbols:

P Contains pork

A Contains alcohol



Store Directory

Contact numbers for outlets featured in this issue

Al Ghandi Electronics: 04-2570007

Bloomingdale's Home: 04-3505333

C Wonder: 04-4099000

Crate & Barrel: 04-3990125

Ethan Allen: 04-3308871

Harvest Home: 04-3420225

Homes R Us: 04-4469820

Lakeland: 04-3236081

Sapori di Bice: 04-3442550

Tavola: 04-3402933

TWG Tea Salon and Boutique: 04-3253857

Valleydeez: 04-3212898

Virgin Megastore: 04-3414353

Zara Home: 04-3414184

Note: Prices in Qatari Riyals are approximately the same as UAE Dirhams.

Your say

We love to hear from you!

INTERNATIONAL IDEAS

I recently picked up the August issue and came across the Nasi Goreng (*Globe-trotting with Rice*) dish from Indonesia which caught my eye. Rice is a staple in my household, and I usually make either biryani or have it steamed with a curry. I was pleased to see a selection of other rice dishes and made the Nasi Goreng and Yaki onigiri which both tasted delicious!

Marsha Lane



TRAVEL INSPIRATION

After reading the August issue travel feature on Andalusia (*Andalusian adventure*), my husband and I have decided to visit that side of Spain this year. Seville is first on my list – I have been wanting to go there for years – followed by Malaga. We can't wait to indulge in the tapas and other delicacies Spain has to offer!

Jenna Dennis



DIET-FRIENDLY

I must say that not all tips and information I get when I search online for particular topics on food allergy are accurate. I am pleased to get recipe ideas in *BBC Good Food ME* magazine, and as an avid reader of the magazine, love all the topics that get covered. Recipes which indicate they are gluten or lactose-free are truly a great boon for me and my children, as we are intolerant to lactose



The winner of the Star Letter gets a **Dhs1,000 shopping voucher from Tavola**, the leading retailer of European products and essential items for the kitchen. Tavola is a one-stop shop for bake ware, tableware, high quality cookware and premium brands such as Mauviel, Le Creuset, and Zwilling kitchen knives. They have stores in the UAE and Qatar, as well as across the GCC.



Star Letter

THE SURPRISE ELEMENT

Cheers to *BBC Good Food ME* for publishing such delicious, nutritive recipes and for being a useful and informative source for cooks every month. I made the cashew nut and crisp lasagne (*Get yourself a raw food deal*, June 2014) for some friends and they couldn't believe it was the humble cashew nut that had gone into this dish and made it flavourful. The other super simple recipe I made was the semi-dried tomatoes (*5 ways with tomatoes*)

which was so easy to make at home and cost hardly anything. The entire Home Cooking section, particularly *Make veg the star*, were all tempting to read. Keep up the good work!

Syeda Khan



– my children are also allergic to gluten – so it's very difficult to prepare dishes on a daily basis as I have to keep in mind what suits us. I would like to thank *BBC Good Food ME* magazine from the bottom of my heart for such great recipes which allergic or intolerant foodies can enjoy too. Thank you for truly understanding everyone's needs and requirements – I just can't wait to get next month's issue.

Hannah Joji



ONE FOR THE KIDS

My daughter celebrated her birthday a week ago, and we invited close friends. I was looking for a menu that would suit everyone, and luckily came across your August issue. I made the Tex-mex cheese dip, sticky duck sliders and truffles (*Party tricks!*) which received rave reviews. My daughter loved it and wants it again. I also tried the ricotta pancakes with fruit compote and vanilla yoghurt (*Be healthy all week*) – my husband loved how soft and fluffy the pancakes were. Thank you *BBC Good Food ME* for always coming up trumps!

Rita Robinson



From our social media pages

- * Awesome, will try the Tomato passata from the August issue – *Rachael Fernandes*
- * Thank you @BBCGoodFoodME! Can't wait to stay in @RoyalRoseHotel – looking forward to seeing the five star hotel #Competition #AbuDhabi – *Chloe (DynamoDolly)*
- * The @BBCGoodFoodME awards are here! All we need is to be recognised as the best. Cast your vote – *La Portes des Indes*

TALK TO US!

Email us on feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com with your thoughts and comments, and send us your photos with your copy of *BBC Good Food ME*!

You can also connect with us on social media! Find us on:



@bbcgoodfoodmiddleeast



@bbcgoodfoodme

Or, you could write to us at:
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Grosvenor Business Tower, Tecom, Office 804
PO Box 13700, Dubai, UAE.

Taste.



Indulge.



Unwind.



Show your support and
nominate The Farm for the
BBC Good Food Middle
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Foodie file

Be a
Star!

What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.



Slapfish



Fumé

DINE IN THE CITY

THREE FAB NEW RESTAURANTS TO CHECK OUT

* Sunset Mall's latest addition is a restaurant, café, bakery, deli and flower shop, combined to form one expansive space under the name of Provedore. You can find freshly baked croissants and pastries, specialty oils, homemade pasta, gift hampers and bouquets in the gourmet area, and French-inspired offerings like tender Wagyu beef fondue pot with three mouthwatering dips, salmon millefeuille, salmon and avocado salad with crabmeat, spicy pasta arabiata with seafood, and a pistachio cream crème brulee at the restaurant and café. Call 04-4230785.

* Slapfish has landed in the Middle East, with its first outlet at China Court, Ibn Batuta. Seafood lovers can try fresh fish and shellfish dishes from this food-truck turned restaurant brand such as tacos, hot shrimp rolls and grilled fish and chips. Call 8007527.

* If you're craving comfort food in a warm, relaxed environment, Fumé at Pier 7 is a must-visit. With whiskey barrel floors, chalkboard menus, cutlery in mini buckets, and food served on wooden platters or rustic bowls, the setting is perfect for their sharing-style offerings. Don't miss their fried calamari with sweet chilli sauce, succulent six hour slow-cooked rib, and teriyaki smoked salmon. Call 04-4215669.



Cooking and shopping for food brings rhythm and meaning to our lives.

- American chef and restaurateur Alice Waters

EDIBLE NATURE

Taking fruit-bearing trees to a whole other level, an artist and professor at Syracuse University, Sam Van Aken, has developed the Tree of 40 fruit, a project that took nine years, which blooms pink, fuchsia, purple and red leaves that will bear over 40 kinds of fruit in spring. The tree was created with an age-old technique called grafting which includes attaching branches of 40 stone fruits to one tree, so that the veins flow into each other. 16 trees are placed all over the US at museums, community centres and private art collections across the US.



Compiled by NICOLA MONTEATH | Photographs SUPPLIED: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM ©

The politics of food

In a glaring example of how political tensions can directly affect the man on the street, Russians are now facing a 6 per cent hike in food prices, following the recent ban on all Western food imported into the country. A direct result of the current tensions between US and Russia over Ukraine, the ban covers meat, dairy, fruit and vegetables, with some exceptions like baby-and pet-food, coffee and olive oil. The ripple effect is affecting other economies too, as Russia was the second biggest importer of poultry from the US.



This just in:

We love this bright, fun Style treasure tray with imagery of iconic Arabic celebrities – kitsch never looked this good! Dhs495 at ValleyDez.

#What's trending

#truffles

These flavoursome mushrooms are slowly becoming the talk of the moment all over again, as the season approaches. Massimo Vidani (@TruffleManDubai) recently posted a picture of fresh black truffles on a bed of burrata, while CaramelDubai posted a picture of their Kobe Bolognese with black autumn truffles. We can't wait to try out seasonal menus with truffle dishes!



Home



COFFEE ON YOUR COMPUTER!

Home-grown coffee brand Coffee Planet has launched a new online store, which offers everything from their renowned coffees, to coffee machines, accessories, starter kits and gift subscriptions, and even a coffee guide to help you pick your favourite coffee according to the origin, flavour profile and brewing method. Free delivery for orders over Dhs75 within Dubai, and Dhs500 anywhere else in the UAE. Visit shop.coffeeplanet.com.



70%

The percentage of farmers in the developing world who are women, according to U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)



Midday munchies



You know that 4pm energy slump when you're craving a snack and haven't got anything good-for-you to hand? Enter Munchbox, a new healthy snack delivery service that delivers a box of assorted all-natural sweet or savoury snacks like spiced nuts, dried fruits, dark chocolate, and other snacks that are all either rich in fibre, protein, vitamins and minerals, or omega-3, and help boost energy levels. Choose from the Lite (low calorie), Surprise, or Energizer boxes, which offer over 20 options to select six to fill your box with. From Dhs59 per box, www.munchbox.ae.



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Aisle file

Gorgeous gourmet buys, kitchen gear, home décor and more.



This pretty pink **TROPICAL PINEAPPLE TEALIGHT HOLDER** is a quirky piece for a dresser or side table. Dhs95 at **ZARA HOME**.



Looking for a new dinner set for everyday use? This ceramic **SONOMA DINNER SET** in blue with a gold rim is stylish and economical too! Dhs99 at **HOMES R US**.



Make a nutritious, probiotic yoghurt at home with the **ELECTRIC GREEK-STYLE YOGHURT MAKER**. The gadget makes 500g Greek-style yoghurt or 1kg regular yoghurt. Dhs300 at **LAKELAND**.

Update your bar kit with this designer **VITAMIN BLOSSOM BOTTLE OPENER** from the Urban Creatures range at **FOREVERCON TEMPORARY.COM** – it makes a great gift too! £16 (about Dhs99) plus shipping.



This **BREAKFAST DINER DISH TOWEL** will add a touch of vintage Americana to your kitchen. Dhs26 at **CRATE AND BARREL**.



Perfect your baking timings with this **RETRO-STYLE POCKET WATCH DESK CLOCK**, which sits neatly on a kitchen counter. Dhs690 at **ETHAN ALLEN**.



Keep your parties colourful by serving canapés and drinks on these **PORCELAIN SAFARI APPETISER PLATES** and **COASTERS**. Dhs225 (set of four) for the plates and Dhs150 (set of four) for the coasters, at **C WONDER**.



Pack frozen soup for lunch in these vibrant **DEXAM SISTEMA TO GO** soup cups that are BPA free. Dhs39 at **VIRGIN MEGASTORE**.

TWG Tea have launched their latest collection of **ICED TEA BAGS** which come in fifteen flavours, ranging from light to sweet and tangy, packaged in a gorgeous gift box. Try the Pomme Prestige (black tea with a hint of apple, shown here) or Pink Flamingo (green tea with crimson hibiscus blossoms). Dhs250 each at **TWG TEA SALON AND BOUTIQUE**.





Here to help

Our expert chef Andy Campbell offers practical advice to tackle all your cooking dilemmas.



Q Canned tomatoes sometimes have a strange taste. How do I alter this in a pasta dish, without adding ketchup or other sauces?

A. My recommendation would be to add garlic, herbs and onions to the tomatoes once you heat it up in the pan – this will definitely change the taste of the sauce. You could also use passata, a sieved tomato pulp available in tetra packs, as an alternative to canned tomatoes.

Q I've heard amaranth is really good for you. What does it taste like and how can I use it?

A. This ingredient is another super food of the Aztecs and is often used to make gluten free breakfast cereal. Similar to biscuits or toast in flavour, amaranth is high in Vitamin C which makes it a great addition to dishes. Try having it sprinkled over a salad or soup.

Q I came across a pizza crust made with quinoa. Could you tell me how to make this?

A. Quinoa can be used in more ways than you can imagine! To use it for pizza base, soak 100 grams quinoa overnight and blend with 60ml of water, salt, 1 tablespoon of baking powder and 1 tablespoon olive oil to make a dough. Roll out into a flat crust and bake until golden brown.

Q I've seen coconut cream in quite a few recipes. Is it available in supermarkets?



A. Coconut cream is available at a selection of supermarkets, but I usually make it at home by dissolving a 50 grams coconut block in 100ml boiling water. You can also make it with dessicated coconut by blending 80 grams dessicated coconut with 500ml boiling water – do this in batches if the blender is small. Strain through a sieve and use.



Q Can I make a hot pasta sauce with Greek yoghurt?

A. Greek yoghurt is so versatile! You definitely can make a hot pasta sauce, but you need to be careful. Stir the yoghurt into the pan with boiled pasta and take it off the heat immediately or the sauce will split. I like to combine the pasta sauce with caramelised onions, thyme and garlic.

Andy's ingredient of the month

I've been using wild mushrooms, which are in season now in Europe, in a lot of my dishes. They are high in fibre and a rich source of protein, minerals and vitamins. Use it to make a mushroom sauce, in pasta, or as a side dish with steak. Available at leading supermarkets.



Menu planner

Whip up a delicious meal with recipes from this issue

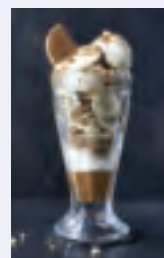
Post-movie supper



This Pea and mint soup is not only easy and comforting but can be made ahead too, p34



Griddled lamb with wild rice salad doesn't take long to toss up but will be filling, p29



Forget a mall-bought ice cream after the movie, this Crunchy peanut butter banoffee sundae is perfect! p64



The Pugliese Cuisine

Straightforward dishes and delightful savors, these are the main features of the Pugliese Cuisine. Classic Mediterranean with an abundance of olive oil and cheeses, coupled with bread and wine.

Indulge on Frisella con pomodorini Pachino marinate e Burrata (Frisella crust topped with Burrata cheese and marinated Pachino cherry tomatoes) and Filetto di branzino in crosta di zucchini sevito con scarola e capperi (Sea bass fillet crusted with zucchini served with escarole and capers), amongst others.



Hands Up for More Lobster!

LOBSTER
LICIOUS !

Experience an exciting new dining concept at Dunes Café, every Thursday from 7pm.
Enjoy unlimited Boston lobster, grilled, chilled, in a salad or curried – however you like it,
accompanied by a plentiful selection of other seafood delicacies.
Start your weekend with a lobster-licious feast.

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Dhs 330 with grape and house beverages



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On my bookshelf. . .



★ We ask the pros to tell us about the cookbook they can't live without!

Chef Simon Barber, Executive chef at Abu Dhabi Golf Club:

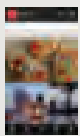
"I love *Flavours* by Donna Hay (William Morrow cookbooks) as the recipes are simple to prepare and are fresh and revitalising, using a range of rich, tangy and mellow flavours including vanilla and chocolate, lemon and lime, and ginger and chilli. It features great tips and pictures to guide the reader along the way."

Watch this:

★ **Grandma's Boy**

on Nat Geo People,
Thursdays at 8:05pm

This show sees Irish teenage celebrity chef, Donal, meet with Nonnas in Italy to seek out family recipes and cook with them. With a different grandmother featured in each episode, Donal not only helps the Nonna cook one of her favourite recipes, but also picks herbs and produce with them, as well as goes it alone to cook a classic Italian dish with his own twist. At the end, he sits down with the family to share a meal, making for a wholesome, feel-good viewing experience.



Download this:

★ **Zomato app, free for iPhones, Windows, Blackberry and Google**

The app version of this hugely popular restaurant listing site (they're so good, we've even partnered with them up on bbcgoodfoodme.com!) isn't just a mobile-optimised version of the website – which offers comprehensive information on thousands of restaurants across the UAE – but offers features such as a direct link to Google maps for navigation, and GPS-enabled Nearby restaurant suggestions. Plus, with its handy search options, it's useful to have on your phone, especially on the go.

Culina-reads

Reviews of the latest cookbooks, food shows and mobile apps.

★ **Gordon Ramsay's Fast Food (Quadrille)**

This pioneering celebrity chef may be better known for his abuse-laden TV shows, but somewhere along the way of building all this hype, people may have lost track of the fact that he is, in fact, a very talented cook. This book helps remind us of that, with its assortment of practical, quick and simple recipes aimed at home cooks who are short on time, to steer them away from the culture of takeaways and processed food. Inspired by his 'The F word' TV show, the recipes are divided into sections as varied as Light and healthy, Easy for a crowd, and Cheap and cheerful, to A taste of Morocco, Mexican flavours, Indian spice, and Thai feast, to bring truly international flavours into the mix. Each chapter is interspersed with collections of '5 fast' recipes – whether it's 5 fast soups, 5 fast working lunches, 5 fast eggs, or 5 fast fruity desserts. With most recipes accompanied by beautiful images, striking and attractive typography, and with useful expert tips peppered in between – for instance, the importance of seasoning in a fast dish, as it doesn't have time develop depth of flavours – the result is a book that anyone who cooks at home, Ramsay fan or not, can benefit from.

Dhs100, available at Jashanmal stores



★ **Schherazade's Feasts: Foods of the Medieval Arab World** by Habeeb Salloum, Muna Salloum and Leila Salloum Elias (University of Pennsylvania Press)

Much more than a cookbook – although it does contain over 120 recipes – this beautiful book is an evocative journey into the rich past of the Arab empire, when they flourished in science, philosophy, literature and not least, gastronomy. Co-authored by a family trio of food writers and historians, the book offers a detailed introduction into the luxurious life of 13th century Arabia, which spanned from the Middle East to Andalusia, offering rare insights into the culture, rituals cuisine, and ingredients of that time (sheep's tail fat anyone?!). The recipes, translated from a variety of sources dating back to those times, are adapted to modern kitchens. With a large chapter dedicated to Appetizers (this is the land of mezze, after all!), the other sections cover soups, entrees – which are further sub-divided by ingredient, such as lamb, chicken, seafood and so on – and desserts and beverages. There's also a selection of special occasion menus, and royal recipes.

US\$24 (about Dhs92), available on amazon.com.



★ **Italian Kitchen** by Anna Del Conte (Square peg)

The undisputed queen of Italian cooking, Anna really brings the authentic soul of this popular – and sadly, much-abused – cuisine to life in this book, a compilation of four of her earlier, smaller books dedicated to antipasti, pasta, risotto and more, and Dolci. Peppered with personal anecdotes and family stories, as well as tips and tricks from her, the recipes range from classic Italian – think Bruschetta, tagliatelle with mushrooms, and tiramisu – to ones that go well beyond the realm of predictable Italian dishes we all tend to cook and eat, such as aubergine stuffed with sausage, pine nuts and currants; spaghetti with scallops, risotto with Dover sole; and rice fritters. In fact, the surprises the book throws up aren't just in unexpected ingredient combinations, but also in revelations such as the use of rice in sweet dishes in Italian cuisine. Not just for lovers of Italian food – and well, who isn't one? – this book is ideal for anyone who enjoys cooking; armed with it, pasta suppers will never taste the same!

Dhs129, available at Jashanmal bookstores.



Tried & tasted

Each month, we review two of the city's top tables.

Modern Japanese



#loveavo #Japanese
#DIFClounge

Where: Toko Dubai, Vida
Downtown Dubai

What's it like: Just when you thought this city didn't need yet another high-end Japanese

lounge and restaurant, along comes this brand from Sydney that goes and changes the game – with nothing more ground-breaking than good food, good service, and a stylish yet relaxed ambience. The contemporary chic interiors are vast, yet feel intimate, with warm wood furniture and a panoramic view into an open kitchen, but as soon as the weather permits, we'd recommend sitting outside on the terrace covered with a canopy of Geisha-style umbrellas, and leafy landscaping. The menu specialises in Izakaya-style dining – although they do offer a selection of sushi and sashimi – which is basically Japanese tapas, a.k.a sharing-style small plates. Becoming quite popular among restaurants here, it's a great way to sample a variety of dishes, while relaxing with your cocktails. We lingered over the succulent, flavoursome boneless chicken wings served with smoked miso butter; the smoked robata-grilled miso salmon with a charred crispy skin and pickled ginger, which came highly recommended, and rightly so; and a delightful grilled avocado with sweet soy and lime (definitely something I'm going to try and recreate at home). The portion sizes are just right, which means we had enough room left to try the spicy baby chicken with lemon soy sauce; a more-ish eringi mushroom with white asparagus and truffle butter, and their signature braised wagyu short rib with wasabi crème fraîche – melt-in-the-mouth, doesn't do justice to just how tender and delicious the meat was. While we did well to pack so much into our meal, dessert was definitely going to be a sharer – and our choice of coconut panacotta with coconut foam and a raspberry sorbet proved that there isn't one thing this kitchen produces

(at least from the ones that I tried) that I couldn't

recommend. And the buzzing crowd on a Thursday night obviously agree!

If you want to go: Around Dhs650 for dinner for two, without drinks. Call 04-4428383.

Best for:
After-work
dinner with
friends

- Sudeshna Ghosh

Where: Creekside Japanese
Restaurant, Sheraton Dubai Creek
Hotel and Towers

What's it like: Even with numerous Japanese restaurants dotted around, whether it's high-end, casual, or hole-in-the wall eateries, most people don't tend to think beyond sushi or ramen – but look further and you will explore a whole different side to spices, textures and aromas in dishes. This contemporary Japanese and Asian restaurant at the newly refurbished Deira hotel is a spacious, no-frills venue with dark marble floors, wooden tables and chairs, with the main attraction being the live cooking stations and open kitchen. On the night we visited, there was a buffet on offer, but my partner and I chose the à la carte option and began with a flavourful marinated slow poached salmon mixed with peppered mango salsa, bean sprouts and pomegranate seeds. The crunchiness of the sprouts and bursts of sweetness from the fruits complemented each soft bite of salmon. We also had the tender confit duck leg daikon roll, beautifully presented with shiso cress and a sweet fruit-based sauce. I ordered the saucy and succulent 48-hour slow cooked short rib – which needed no effort tearing apart – on a bed of parsnip purée, crisp fried onions and water spinach, for mains. My dining partner chose the grilled prawns with wasabi mayonnaise and flying fish roe – we wished there was more mayonnaise added in though as we clearly like our condiments! Both dishes were eaten with a tasty side of mixed stir fry noodles (Bakmeegoreng). A lemongrass panna cotta with kumquat salsa was our dessert of choice, and it immediately refreshed our palates with the aroma and slightly citrus-y flavours. Overall, the service was great, even though the restaurant was packed, and the food was better than we expected – making it a great new casual dining destination in Dubai.

If you want to go: Approximately Dhs350 for two without drinks.

Call 04-2213468.

- Nicola Monteath

Best for:
A family dinner



Photographs SUPPLIED and by REVIEWERS

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Flavours of the month

Our pick of the best restaurant offers, promotions and deals this month.



* Luxury lunch

Whether it's for a daytime date or a high-powered lunch meeting, Sass Café in DIFC is the place to head to for a glamorous lunch. The celeb-favoured import from Monaco is now serving up a four-course lunch menu at great value prices. The opulent, high-ceilinged space, with live piano bar music, make for a very civilised atmosphere to enjoy their signature Mediterranean delicacies like Burrata with tomatoes, salmon tartare, veal Milanese style and beef tenderloin with smoked garlic.

Dhs120 for four courses, desserts cost Dhs25 extra. Call 04-3527722.



Sass Café in DIFC

* American delights

Feast on classic dishes with an updated flavour profile at West 14th and indulge in beef tenderloin ceviche, sticky calamari and interesting options like the Butcher's wife burger. Wagyu steak and seared scallops are some of the main options to tuck into.

À la carte menu, call 04-4477601.

* Chocolate haven

Love chocolate? Swiss chocolatier Sprüngli Middle East have launched their first boutique and café outside Switzerland at Village Mall in Jumeirah. Visit the outlet to try their renowned truffles and Luxemburgerli (macarons) – you will find it hard to leave without taking home a box or two of these decadent treats.

Call 04-2200704.

* Gourmet on the golf course

Nineteen, The Address Montgomerie Dubai, has launched a new menu which features unique dishes like smoked 64C poached eggs, slow cooked boneless short ribs, glacier tooth fish 51 (known as Wagyu of the Sea) and Australian lamb shoulder and rack, among many other delicious choices for seafood, vegetarian and meat lovers.

Available daily, call 04-3631275.



* Health focused fine dining

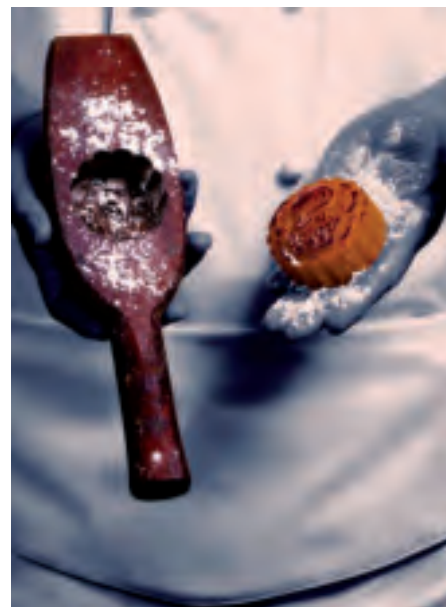
If sticking to your diet is always a hassle when dining out, choose Waterfront at Madinat Jumeirah as your next lunch or dinner spot. Talise Nutrition Executive chef Gabriele Kurz has recently launched The Flavors of Fitness menu at the restaurant, which is marked with symbols to indicate whether a dish supports muscle development (Shape), helps with weight management (Weight) and balances the mind and body (Body and Mind). Dishes like the whole wheat spaghetti with grilled king prawns, broccoli, garlic, lemon, chilli and parsley, rack of lamb with thyme and rosemary and free-range corn-fed chicken are on offer, along with soups, salads and desserts.

À la carte menu, call 04-4068999.

* Chinese cake fest

Celebrate the Chinese mid-autumn Mooncake festival this month by buying a special cake from Li Jiang at The Ritz-Carlton Abu Dhabi, Grand Canal. The traditional mooncakes, typically decorated with a egg yolk in the middle to represent the moon, are available in flavours such as green tea, lotus, green bean and panda lotus.

From Dhs40 per cake, available from September 4-25. Call 02-8188282.



Compiled by NICOLA MONTEATH | Photographs SUPPLIED

✱ New Italian menu

Treat a loved one to dinner at At.mosphere restaurant, and try their new menu of appetising Italian classics like Andria's Burrata featuring summer truffles, violet artichokes and pickled forest mushrooms paired with creamy mozzarella, tuna tartare niçoise with a twist of borlotti beans, quail egg and anchovy beignet, as well as Australian lamb loin with ricotta gnocchi, broad beans with a preserved fruit accompaniment. Seafood lovers can choose Canadian lobster tail with green pea purée, scallop raviolo and crisp edamame.

Available à la carte or from Dhs650 for a five-course tasting menu. Call 04-8883444.



✱ Weekend treat

The highly rated Qbara restaurant has launched a new Friday brunch which features a selection of classics brought to the table like spicy lamb cutlets, char grilled salmon, red onion charmoula and chicken tagine, among other dishes.

From Dhs350 per person, call 04-7092500.

✱ Brunch season

Feast on Belgian specialties while listening to contemporary jazz at The Café Belge brunch returning again for another season. Relish sharing platters of dishes like razor clams with lemon pepper dressing, homemade duck pate with Ghent mustard, and their signature mussels with champagne cream.

Fridays, from Dhs295 per person. Call 04-3722323.



✱ Surprise! Surprise!

Frankies' Italian Restaurant Bar and Grill have launched a surprise menu designed in four or six courses. Simply advise the chef of any allergies and the type of food you are craving, and get ready to tantalise your tastebuds with dishes that are a mix of new creations and specialties from the à la carte menu.

From Dhs300, call 04-3994311.

✱ Take it to go!

Comptoir 102, a casual dining spot and boutique in Jumeirah, have launched their takeaway service, so you can take your gluten-free and and vegan dishes to go. What's on the menu? A mouth-watering seaweed and avocado tartare and nori quinoa, to name just a few.

From 8.30am-6pm, call 04-3854555.



✱ Seasonal specialties

The Farm at Al Barari have introduced new dishes to the menu featuring seasonal produce such as truffle oil, premium yellowfin tuna, king scallops and dragon fruit in over 20 dishes. The menu showcases tuna tartare, North African Shakshouka, gluten-free Apple pancakes and orange tart made with blood oranges from Spain.

Call 04-3925660.



✱ Café culture

Tom and Serg, the Al Quoz eatery that has been making waves ever since it opened, has introduced a new menu. Delicious additions include Reuben sandwich filled with Wagyu salt beef, aged cheddar, sauerkraut, dill pickles and mustard mayo on rye, as well as pumpkin salad, and summer garlic and chilli spaghetti.

Call 04-3388934.

✱ Japanese treats

Fans of Okku will soon want to hotfoot to the restaurant to try the new additions to the menu – there are as many as 36! The selection of small plates include seared Norwegian Mackerel with garlic salt, and tuna and foie gras carpaccio in sweet soy and fresh lemon, black volcanic salt, chives and garlic crisps, to name a few, while the larger plates offer miso baked Atlantic lobster stuffed with prawn surimi, and wagyu shioyaki on hot Himalayan salt rock.

Call 04-5018777.

The Doha diaries

Our Doha-based columnist has her finger on the pulse of the city's foodie scene.

Table for one

I have a deep, dark secret that I don't like to talk about at parties because it elicits the kind of pitying look that a woman of my advancing age just can't deal with. The truth is, while I love the company of my family and friends, I consciously choose to dine out alone at least once a week.

Put it down to being an only child, or having an overly articulated work life, or my pathological hatred of small talk with people I never want to see again, but I enjoy sitting, eating a meal with just a book or a newspaper for company. "Don't you get bored?" someone asked recently. No I don't. Another friend said she refuses to dine alone because "people will judge". Mostly they are too busy with their own business.

Internationally, this is now a trend. A recent trip to Florence in Italy saw me dine alone in a fully-booked Michelin Star restaurant. No one batted an eyelid. Nor should they. Eenmaal, a pop-up restaurant in Amsterdam features only tables for one.

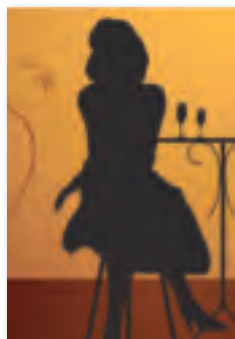
The bonuses of dining alone are that you can take your time, usually you get special treatment and you will ALWAYS get a seat. My two golden rules are simple – always bring reading materials, usually my iPad or something suitably interesting, and give off the 'I am so clever and far too awesome to care what you think' vibe.

With high numbers of solo business travellers, this is something restaurants and hotels in Qatar, and the Middle East in general, are slowly starting to understand and use to their advantage. Many restaurants in five star hotels are starting to introduce bar-style seating usually with a view of the kitchen where single diners can sit alone. Cafés now routinely offer newspapers and magazines to keep you occupied. And two hotels in Doha – the Four Seasons and W Doha – have introduced Bento-style boxes designed perfectly for one. Casual dining restaurants like Applebees and Nandos have the solo dining experience down pat. No questions, no judgment and bottomless soft drink refills? Yes, please!

Some in Doha are still learning. A recent solo meal in a hotel saw two waiters hover like helicopters near my table just in case I wanted to chat. Another time a café manager refused to clear the extra space at my table "just in case". In case my imaginary friend shows up?

I like to think I am turning the tide for solo diners in the Middle East one meal at a time. If you see me, or someone like me, sitting alone in a restaurant in Doha, don't pity me; just think 'How fabulous'!

- Rachel Morris is a Qatar-based writer and food blogger (lifeonthewedge.net).



The latest food news and happenings in the city.

Asian affair

Head to Jones the Grocer this month, to try their limited-time special menu featuring the flavours of South East Asia. Tuck into wagyu beef samosas with sweet chilli sauce, squid calaga with garlic rice to get a taste of Indonesia, and the Sri Lankan Watalappan dessert with a twist which features coconut, cashew nuts and spices, accompanied by poached fruit.

Available only in September, à la carte menu prices, call +974 4407 7175.



Oktoberfest celebrations

Gather a bunch of friends and head to Market by Jean-Georges, W Doha Hotel and Residences, for a Bavarian-inspired Oktoberfest brunch. The buffet features specialties like goulash soup, wiener schnitzel, pretzels, sausages and other delicacies.

On September 19, From QR290 per person, call +974 4453 5135.

A fresh start

The Renaissance Hotel, Courtyard by Marriott, and Marriott Executive Apartments Doha City Centre have rebranded to become The Marriott Marquis City Centre Doha – the first of its kind in the Middle East, outside the US. A selection of culinary options will soon be launched at the hotel – watch this space! Call +974 4419 5000.



Terrific tapas!

The Lounge and Aroma at Kempinski Residence and Suites Doha is the place to head to for the Tapas Fiesta taking place this month. Savour home-cured beef ham, chilli peppers, seafood paella and potato salad with tuna, among other delights.

Call +974 4405 3325

SWEET TOOTH PURSUIT

342 steps!!! up to the restaurant



By the time we made it to the restaurant we'd lost a shoe, were gasping for air and could barely stand upright from clambering up what seemed like never-ending steps. But we made it, to dessert heaven, and what a gloriously sweet reward it turned out to be.



Yum..... Would so do it again

Thanks step number 160 something..

PASSIONATELY
ITALIAN

POSITANO

COASTAL ITALIAN

Some folks go to great lengths to sample authentic coastal Italian cuisine. Who can blame them? No one can resist a decadent, lemon-infused gelato dessert with a touch of Italian charm. Fortunately, you don't have to go as far. Positano is open daily from 6pm to midnight at the JW Marriott Marquis Dubai.

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mhrs.dxbjw.restaurant.reservation@marriott.com
jwmarriottmarquisdubailife.com

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THE CATEGORIES

FINE DINING

- * RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR - DUBAI*
- * RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR - ABU DHABI*
- * BEST NEW RESTAURANT - DUBAI*
(Opened on or after January 2014)
- * BEST NEW RESTAURANT - ABU DHABI*
(Opened on or after January 2014)
- * RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR - DOHA
- * CHEF OF THE YEAR*
- * BEST EUROPEAN RESTAURANT
- * BEST ASIAN RESTAURANT

RESTAURANTS

- * BEST CONTEMPORARY BRITISH
- * BEST LATIN AMERICAN
- * BEST INDIAN
- * BEST MIDDLE EASTERN
- * BEST STEAKHOUSE
- * BEST BRUNCH
- * BEST ITALIAN
- * BEST SEAFOOD
- * BEST EXPERIENTIAL DINING VENUE
- * MOST SUSTAINABLE RESTAURANT 

CASUAL DINING

- * BEST INTERNATIONAL
- * BEST INDIAN
- * BEST ASIAN
- * BEST MIDDLE EASTERN
- * BEST CAFÉ

- * BEST FOOD BLOGGER 

INGREDIENTS

- * FAVOURITE SUPERMARKET
- * FAVOURITE SPECIALITY FOOD
STORE/MARKET
- * FAVOURITE BRAND FOR STORE
CUPBOARD ITEMS

HOME COOKING

- * FAVOURITE DAIRY BRAND
- * FAVOURITE OLIVE OIL BRAND
- * FAVOURITE TEA BRAND
- * FAVOURITE COFFEE BRAND
- * FAVOURITE JUICE BRAND

ACCESSORIES

- * FAVOURITE LARGE KITCHEN
APPLIANCE BRAND
- * FAVOURITE SMALL KITCHEN
APPLIANCE BRAND
- * FAVOURITE TABLEWARE STORE

*Creating new benchmarks in the industry, the vote-based awards recognise the top restaurants and food-related brands and stores.
Log on to bbcgoodfoodme.com/awards/2014 to get your favourite restaurants and food brands
of the region, into the running. By nominating, you also stand a chance to win a very special prize – stay tuned for details!*

HOW IT WORKS

In the nomination phase, which runs from August 4 -September 30, we are calling consumers to nominate their favourites in each category online. After September 30, the top ten nominees in each category (with the highest votes) will be listed on our website. Between October 15 and November 27, consumers will then get to vote again for the winner, from that list. The winners will be revealed at our gala awards event in January 2015.

** Winners for Restaurant of the Year (Dubai & Abu Dhabi), Best New Restaurant (Dubai & Abu Dhabi), Best sustainable restaurant and Chef of the Year will be chosen by an independent judging panel.*

nineteen



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Spanish stuffed
peppers, recipe p55

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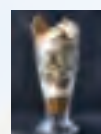
IN THIS SECTION



* Fast, fresh
weeknight
suppers, P28



* Healthy lunches
for on-the-go
days, P33



* Indulge in a
nostalgic treat,
P62

Make it tonight

Midweek meals shouldn't be monotonous! Try these new recipes. Recipes Nancy McDougall
Photographs DAVID MUNNS

Pancetta & pepper piperade

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK

30 MINS **Easy** **P** **Vit C** **3 of 5-a-day** **Gluten Free**

140g pancetta pieces

1 red onion, finely chopped

3 peppers, 1 each of green, red and yellow, deseeded and finely diced

400g can chopped tomatoes

2 tbsp tomato purée

4 medium eggs

Small handful of basil leaves, shredded

Crusty bread, to serve (optional)

1 Put the pancetta and onion in a large, deep frying pan. Cook for 7 mins until the onion is beginning to soften.

2 Add the peppers, tomatoes and tomato purée to the pan and mix well. Season, cover and

cook for 10-15 mins.

3 Make 4 small wells in the mixture.

Crack an egg into each well and cook for a further 5-6 mins or until the eggs have set. Scatter with basil and serve straight away, with crusty bread, if you like.

PER SERVING 259 kcals, protein 15g, carbs 13g, fat 15g, sat fat 5g, fibre 5g, sugar 12g, salt 1.3g

Great way to use up eggs





Griddled lamb with wild rice salad

SERVES 4 ● PREP 10 MINS ● COOK 35 MINS **Easy**  **1 of 5-a-day** **Gluten Free** 

250g basmati & wild rice
4 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 garlic clove, crushed
½ tsp ground cumin
75 whole almonds
4 ripe tomatoes, diced
100g mixed black and green olives, marinated in garlic and oil (see tip, right), halved
Handful of flat-leaf parsley, chopped
4 lamb cutlets

1 Cook the rice in boiling salted water following pack instructions. Drain and immediately run under cold water until the rice is completely cold.

2 Meanwhile, put the oil, vinegar, garlic and cumin in a screw-top jar. Season generously and shake well to mix. Toast the almonds in a small frying pan, stirring, for 1-2 mins. Cool, then roughly chop.

3 Mix the rice with the almonds, tomatoes, olives and parsley. Heat a griddle pan and season the lamb well. When the pan is hot, cook the lamb, turning occasionally, for 7-8 mins. Remove from the pan, cover with foil and leave to rest for 2 mins.

4 Pour the dressing over the rice salad and mix well. Top with the lamb cutlets and serve.


PER SERVING 634 kcals, protein 31g, carbs 49g, fat 34g, sat fat 8g, fibre 3g, sugar 4g, salt 1.3g

TIP Choose olives from the deli counter marinated in oil and garlic. Or make your own: coat olives in good-quality olive oil and add a few finely chopped garlic cloves.

Gutsy flavours



Smoked haddock & chorizo salad

SERVES 4 ● PREP 10 MINS
 ● COOK 10-15 MINS **Easy**  **P**

140g crusty white bread, such as pain de campagne or sourdough, cut into 2cm/¾in cubes

2 tbsp olive oil

140g bag watercress, spinach & rocket salad

175g cooking chorizo or beef sausages, sliced

350g smoked haddock fillet, cut into 2.5cm/1in pieces

Juice of 1 lemon

1 tsp Dijon mustard

1 Toss the bread in 1 tbsp of the olive oil. Heat a large frying pan and fry the

bread for 5-10 mins until crisp and golden, then set aside on kitchen paper.

2 Meanwhile, put the salad in a serving bowl. Wipe out the frying pan and pour in the remaining oil. Add the chorizo slices and cook for 1 min, stirring occasionally. Add the haddock to the pan and cook for 3-4 mins, turning over carefully halfway through. When cooked, the haddock will be opaque and the chorizo should be beginning to turn crisp around the edges.

3 Use a slotted spoon to remove the haddock and chorizo from the pan, and add to the salad with the bread cubes.

4 Return the pan to the heat and add the lemon juice and mustard. Stir and heat through for 30 secs, then drizzle over the salad. Serve straight away.

PER SERVING 350 kcals, protein 29g, carbs 19g, fat 17g, sat fat 5g, fibre 1g, sugar 3g, salt 3.0g >>

Your new
midweek favourite



Sweet sesame chilli chicken

SERVES 4 ● PREP 15 MINS

● COOK 10 MINS **Easy** **WITHOUT**

NOODLES OR RICE **Folate** **Vit C** **1 of 5-a-day**

- 2 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 large onion, halved and sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 5cm piece of ginger, peeled and finely chopped
- 4 chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 300g pak choi, trimmed, leaves separated and larger leaves halved
- 2 tbsp sesame seeds
- 2 tsp cornflour
- 1 tbsp soy sauce, plus extra to serve
- 3 tbsp sweet chilli sauce

1 tbsp lemon juice

Egg noodles or rice, cooked, to serve (optional)

1 Heat the oil in a wok or large saucepan. Add the onion and stir-fry for 5 mins until turning golden. Add the garlic, ginger, chicken, pak choi and sesame seeds, and stir-fry for 5 mins or until the chicken is cooked.

2 Mix the cornflour with the soy sauce, chilli sauce and lemon juice. Add to the pan and stir-fry for 1 min. Serve straight away with extra soy sauce and egg noodles or rice, if you like.

PER SERVING 277 kcals, protein 33g, carbs 13g, fat 10g, sat fat 1g, fibre 3g, sugar 9g, salt 1.4g



Spicy roast veg & lentils

SERVES 4 ● PREP 15 MINS

● COOK 40 MINS **Easy** **V** **Low cal** **Low fat**

Fibre **Vit C** **4 of 5-a-day** **Good for you**

- 1 small-medium butternut squash (about 950g)
- 1 red onion, halved and thickly sliced
- 3 peppers (a mix of red, orange and yellow from a pack), deseeded and cut into 1cm wide strips
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 3 tbsp curry paste
- 800g canned Puy lentils, drained and rinsed
- 150ml hot vegetable stock
- Large handful of coriander, chopped

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Using a sharp knife, peel the butternut squash. Cut it in half lengthways, scoop out the seeds, then cut into 1cm-thick slices widthways across the squash.

2 Put the squash slices in a large roasting tin with the onion, peppers and garlic. Mix the oil with the curry paste and drizzle over the vegetables. Toss well to coat in the curry mix and season.

3 Roast for 30 mins until the vegetables are beginning to soften. Add the lentils and stock to the roasting tin and mix. Return to the oven for a further 5-10 mins until the vegetables are tender. Stir in the coriander and serve straight away.

PER SERVING 321 kcals, protein 10g, carbs 38g, fat 12g, sat fat 1g, fibre 11g, sugar 19g, salt 0.6g **GF**

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Use these soft wraps to make fajitas or burritos, top them with tomato sauce and cheese for a quick pizza, or fill fresh ingredients and roll. SpinneysFood, exclusively available at Spinneys.



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Good in every way

Low-cal lunches

300
calories
or less

This selection of fast and filling lunch ideas all weigh in at 300 calories or less, but the combination of delicious ingredients will keep you satisfied and energised. Recipes

SARA BUENFELD Photographs SAM STOWELL

279 kcals

Protein-rich tuna, eggs and beans keep you full. They also repair and replenish your body

Lemony tuna & asparagus salad box

SERVES 2 • PREP 5 MINS

• COOK 8 MINS **Easy** **Low cal**

Folate **Fibre** **2 of 5-a-day** **Good for you** **Gluten Free**

2 large eggs

200g asparagus, woody ends snapped off, spears halved

160g can tuna in spring water (no need to drain)

1 small red onion, very finely chopped

125g cannellini beans from a can, drained

zest and juice ½ lemon

1 tbsp fresh dill, chopped

1 tsp extra virgin olive oil

1 Put a pan of water on to boil with a steamer above. When boiling, lower the eggs into the water and steam the asparagus above for 8 mins.

2 Meanwhile, gently toss all the other ingredients together and arrange on plates or in rigid containers. Plunge the eggs into cold water to cool them a little, then peel and quarter. Add the eggs and asparagus to the tuna salad.

Will keep in the fridge for 2 days.

PER SERVING 279 kcals, protein 33g, carbs 12g, fat 10g, sat fat 3g, fibre 7g, sugar 4g, salt 1.0g >>





276 kcals

Crispy prosciutto strips add a savoury (yet lean) hit of flavour

Pea & mint soup with crispy prosciutto strips

SERVES 2 ● PREP 5 MINS

● COOK 15 MINS **Easy** **P** **Low cal** **Low fat**
Folate **Fibre** **Vit C** **Iron** **2 of 5-a-day**

2 leeks, well washed and thinly sliced
 200g potato (unpeeled), scrubbed and grated
 500ml chicken or vegetable stock
 200g frozen peas
 150g pot 0% bio yoghurt
 2 tbsp mint, chopped
 2 slices prosciutto, all excess fat removed

1 Put the leeks, potato and stock in a pan and bring to the boil. Cover and simmer for 8 mins.

2 Tip in the peas, cover and cook for 5 mins more. Take off the heat and blitz with a hand blender until smooth, then stir in the yoghurt and mint.

3 Meanwhile, lay the slices of prosciutto in a large non-stick frying pan in a single layer and heat until crisp. Allow to cool a little, then tear into strips, ready to sprinkle over the soup with some ground black pepper. *Will keep in the fridge for 2 days.*

PER SERVING 276 kcals, protein 20g, carbs 38g, fat 5g, sat fat 2g, fibre 14g, sugar 14g, salt 1.9g



284 kcals

Open sandwiches mean you use less bread, but can pile on plenty of toppings

Turkey salad on rye

SERVES 2 ● PREP 8 MINS ● NO COOK

Easy **Low cal** **Low fat** **Folate** **1 of 5-a-day**

6 very thin slices rye bread (about 75g)
 3 small tomatoes, sliced
 12 cucumber slices
 100g thinly sliced turkey breast (look for carved turkey rather than pre-formed slices)
 6 Little Gem lettuce leaves, shredded
FOR THE DRESSING
 1 tbsp light mayonnaise
 3 tbsp 0% bio yoghurt
 ½ tsp Madras curry powder
 1 tbsp raisins
 2 spring onions, finely chopped

Mix the dressing ingredients and spread a little on each slice of bread. Pile on the tomato, cucumber and turkey slices, and the lettuce. Top with any remaining dressing. *Best eaten the same day.*

PER SERVING 284 kcals, protein 24g, carbs 35g, fat 6g, sat fat 1g, fibre 5g, sugar 19g, salt 1.0g

**296 kcals**

Pepper & walnut hummous with veggie dippers

SERVES 2 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK

6 MINS **Easy** **V** **Low cal** **Folate** **Fibre** **Vit C****3 of 5-a-day** **Good for you** **Gluten Free**

400g can chickpeas, drained

1 garlic clove

1 large roasted red pepper from a jar (not in oil), about 100g

1 tbsp tahini

Juice of ½ lemon

4 walnut halves, chopped

2 courgettes, 2 carrots, 2 celery sticks, all cut into batons

Put the chickpeas, garlic, pepper, tahini and lemon juice in a bowl. Blitz with a hand blender or in a food processor to make a thick purée. Stir in the walnuts. Pack into pots, if you like, and serve with the veggie sticks.

Will keep in the fridge for 2 days, although the vegetables are best prepared fresh to preserve their vitamins.

PER SERVING 296 kcals, protein 14g, carbs 30g, fat 14g, sat fat 2g, fibre 12g, sugar 9g, salt 0.8g



300 kcals

Lentils, like beans and wholegrains, are beneficial, as they slowly release their energy, keeping your blood sugar stable

Puy lentils with smoked tofu

SERVES 2 • PREP 10 MINS

• COOK 5 MINS **Easy** **V** **Low cal** **Low fat****Folate** **Fibre** **2 of 5-a-day** **Good for you**

Fry Light 1-cal oil spray

1 large courgette, finely diced

100g smoked tofu, finely diced

½ tsp smoked paprika

1½ tbsp balsamic vinegar

250g sachet cooked Puy lentils

1 red onion, finely chopped

1 medium roasted red pepper from a jar (not in oil), about 85g, sliced

Good handful of pea shoots or rocket

1 Spray a non-stick pan with 3 sprays of oil and add the courgettes, tofu and smoked paprika. Cook for a few mins to soften the courgettes. Stir in the balsamic vinegar and allow to sizzle and reduce.

2 Meanwhile, tip the lentils, onion and pepper into a bowl and toss gently to break up any clumps of lentils. Add the tofu and courgettes, and toss again. *Will keep for 2 days in the fridge.* Scatter over the pea shoots just before serving.

PER SERVING 300 kcals, protein 24g, carbs 38g, fat 6g, sat fat 1g, fibre 12g, sugar 8g, salt 1.3g **GF**

Pack a healthy lunchbox

Packed lunches for everyone in the family that will boost energy, brighten the day and keep you going until dinner time. Recipes KATY GREENWOOD Photographs WILL HEAP

Advice
& recipes for
all ages



Exciting ideas for children

With most children taking a packed lunch to school, not to mention the many office and outdoor workers who rely on them, it's clear what a vital contribution lunchboxes make. That said, thinking up inspiring ideas can be a challenge. It's tempting to fall into the trap of using packaged, ready-made options. Although these seem like the easy answer, they tend to be high in fat, saturated fat, salt and sugar.

Keep choices varied, fresh and tasty – our lunchbox recipes not only look and taste great, they're also high in protein, veg, fruit and fibre, but low in fat, salt and sugar. Lunch is an important point in the school day and should provide at least a third of your child's daily requirements – without it youngsters struggle to concentrate in the afternoon. Pack plenty of sustaining, nutritious options to make the school day a productive one.

Coping with a fussy eater

- ✓ **Involve your child** in planning and preparing their lunchbox – kids are more likely to try foods that they've been involved in selecting and making.
- ✓ **Children are happier** choosing from a small range of foods. If your child seems to pick just one or two favoured things every day, this is not unusual – gradually introduce more options but be prepared to be patient.
- ✓ **If they refuse wholegrains**, like wholemeal bread, don't worry – some small children find fibrous foods too filling and they may even upset their small stomachs. Instead, supply fibre by opting for beans and pulses puréed into a creamy dip or add to salads or sandwich fillings. Introduce brown versions of rice, pasta and bread when your child is a little older.
- ✓ **Talk with other mums** and use their child's healthy appetite as an example for yours to follow.
- ✓ **Don't use food as a reward** – this reinforces the idea that sugary, fatty foods are better options than healthy whole fruit or dairy products.

How much does my child need?

You've probably noticed that some food labels display the percentage of your Guideline Daily Amount (GDAs) that the food supplies – many manufacturers show these figures to help you make sense of the information on the label. GDAs are a guide to the amount of calories and nutrients an adult or child may have as part of a balanced, healthy diet. Remember, we all vary in size and activity levels so these figures are only a guide, but they can help you to see how much a food is contributing to your child's daily diet.

Guideline Daily Amounts for children aged 5-10

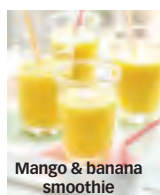
Energy	1,800 kcal
Protein	24g
Carbohydrates	220g
Sugar	85g
Fat	70g
Saturates	20g
Fibre	15g
Salt	4g

Buy healthier – what to check on the label

When you do buy ready-packaged options, read the label – this is key to making good choices. Here's the information you need at your fingertips:

	What's a lot	What's a little
Fat	More than 17.5g per 100g	3g or less per 100g
Saturates	More than 5g per 100g	1.5g or less per 100g
Sugar	More than 22.5g per 100g	5g or less per 100g
Salt	More than 1.5g per 100g	0.3g or less per 100g

Find more recipes on bbcgoodfoodme.com



Get kids to eat up!

- **Make fruit more exciting** with a fruit slaw. Cut apple, firm mango, peaches and plums into fine matchsticks, add a few blueberries and toss together with a little lime juice. Serve in tubs.
- **Swap the tuna mayonnaise** in their sandwiches for tinned mackerel or salmon mixed with mayonnaise – these will provide a higher amount of essential omega-3 fatty acids.
- **Freeze berries, banana slices or grapes** before packing into containers – they will defrost by lunchtime but keep the lunchbox cool.
- **Instead of a sandwich**, give them a little tub of houmous with blanched broccoli, raw carrot, red pepper or cucumber sticks for dipping.
- **Write a message or your child's name** onto a boiled egg or a banana skin.



Portion sizes for little ones (5-10 years)

- **A drink** Ideal options include
- water, pure 100% fruit juice, milk
- or yoghurt-based drinks (with less
- than 5% added sugar).

- **Dairy**
- • Yoghurt/fromage frais, child-size pots vary from 50-100g.
- • Hard cheese like cheddar, approximately 15g-20g.
- • Soft cheese, approximately 20-25g.
- • Glass of milk, approximately 150-175ml.
- **Calcium** is essential for bone-building. Good sources are milk, cheese,
- yoghurt and fromage frais, as well as green leafy veg and canned fish.

- • • **Protein** is important for helping your child to grow. It will also keep them feeling fuller for longer. Good choices include skinless chicken, oily fish, eggs and dairy foods, as well as beans and pulses for vegetarians. Give your child the amount they can fit in the palm of their hand.

- • • • • **Vegetables** Aim for two portions of fruit and veg, with at least one being veg or salad. Fresh, frozen, dried, canned or you can use a juice – they all count.

- • • **Fruit**
- • The amount your child can fit in the palm of their hand – typically
- • one small apple or banana, or
- • three or four cherry tomatoes.

- • • **Starchy carbs** such as bread, noodles, pasta, rice or potatoes. These are
- • important for energy and should make up
- • a third of their lunchbox – opt for
- • wholegrain versions or, for sandwiches,
- • try one of the high-fibre 'white' breads. >>



Interesting lunches for teenagers

This is the time that kids start to exert more control over what they eat, which makes guiding them towards the right choices all the more difficult. It's worth reminding your teenager that eating well not only helps them to perform at their best, but it's key for looking and feeling fab. Our on-trend recipes will not only make their mates envious, but are designed to provide the vital nutrients they need at this stage.

Do include

- ✓ **Iron** – Girls, especially, are at risk of being low in this mineral, so include plenty of iron-rich choices like lean meat, dark green leafy veg, dried fruit like apricots, as well as chickpeas, lentils and beans.
- ✓ **Zinc** – Growing kids need this mineral, especially as teens, so include good sources like lean beef, eggs, Brazil nuts and almonds (taking into consideration your child's school guidelines about nuts) as well as seeds including pumpkin and sesame.
- ✓ **Omega-3 fatty acids** – These all-important fatty acids keep the brain well-oiled and help to establish healthy, balanced hormones. Try oily varieties of fish including salmon, tuna, sardines, trout and mackerel.
- ✓ **Snacks** – Teens love snacking so pack some handy nibbles like homemade popcorn, flavoured with chilli or paprika instead of salt or sugar.

✗ Avoid

Empty calories from the likes of fizzy drinks and squash – swap them for yoghurt-based smoothies, 100% fruit juice or plain water.

Pizza pasta salad

SERVES 1 ● PREP 10 MINS ● COOK 12-15 MINS

Easy   1 of 5-a-day

85g pasta, use a favourite shape
1 tsp olive oil
1 tbsp sundried tomato pesto
85g baby plum tomatoes, halved
50g light mozzarella, cubed
3-4 black olives, halved
4 slices salami, sliced into ribbons
Handful of basil leaves

- 1 Cook the pasta following pack instructions. Drain, rinse under cold water to cool, then drain well.
- 2 Toss with the oil and sundried tomato pesto, season to taste. Place in a jar or plastic box and scatter over the remaining ingredients in layers, ending with the basil.

PER SERVING 547 kcal, protein 26g, carbs 49g, fat 27g, sat fat 9g, fibre 2g, sugar 5g, salt 1.8g

Black bean chimichurri salad

SERVES 1 ● PREP 15 MINS ● NO COOK

Easy     3 of 5-a-day 

400g can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 tomato, roughly chopped

¼ red onion, finely chopped
½ avocado, chopped
50g feta, crumbled into chunks
FOR THE CHIMICHURRI
Large handful of coriander
Large handful of parsley
2 tbsp vinegar
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
½ garlic clove, roughly chopped
¼ tsp chilli powder
¼ tsp ground cumin

- 1 Whizz all the chimichurri ingredients together in a blender or the small bowl of a food processor, until combined. Season to taste and set aside.
- 2 In a bowl or plastic container toss together all the salad ingredients. Drizzle over the dressing, or keep it separate in a small jar to stir through the salad just before eating.

PER SERVING 627 kcal, protein 31g, carbs 50g, fat 33g, sat fat 11g, fibre 18g, sugar 7g, salt 1.9g

Japanese-style bento box

SERVES 1 ● PREP 20 MINS, PLUS COOLING

● COOK 25 MINS    

Omega-3 2 of 5-a-day

100g fresh edamame in the pods
Handful of a favourite fruit, such as fresh pineapple, blueberries or strawberries

FOR THE SUSHI

100g sushi rice
1 tbsp rice vinegar
½ tsp golden caster sugar
1 sheet nori
1 smoked mackerel fillet, about 75g, flaked
1 tbsp light mayonnaise
2 spring onions, chopped
Pea-sized blob wasabi (optional)
¼ red pepper, thinly sliced lengthways, about 6 slices

- 1 Bring a pan of water to the boil and cook the edamame for 3-4 mins (or 1-2 mins if using frozen soya beans) until tender. Drain, sprinkle with salt and set aside.
- 2 Rinse the rice well in cold water until the water runs clear. Put the rice in a heavy-based pan with a tight-fitting lid and cover with 200ml water. Bring just to the boil, then put on the lid, turn the heat to its lowest point and cook for 15-20 mins, until the liquid is absorbed. Remove from the heat and leave with the lid on for another 10 mins.
- 3 Spoon the cooked rice into a wide bowl and

leave to cool a little. Stir together the rice vinegar, sugar and a small pinch of salt, until the sugar and salt dissolve. Mix this into the cooled rice. Lay the nori sheet on a sushi rolling mat or sheet of cling film. With damp hands, spread the rice over two-thirds of the nori sheet.

4 Mix the smoked mackerel, mayonnaise and spring onions, season well with black pepper. Spread a line of wasabi down the middle of the rice, if using, and layer on the red pepper pieces, then the fish mixture. Roll the sushi up, starting from the end covered with rice. Dampen the uncovered end to help it stick. Slice into about 6 x 3cm thick pieces.

5 Pop the sushi rolls into a bento box or lunchbox, adding the edamame and fruit to the other compartments.

PER SERVING 619 kcal, protein 25g, carbs 81g, fat 20g, sat fat 3g, fibre 6g, sugar 11g, salt 2.1g

Vietnamese chicken baguettes (Banh Mi)

SERVES 1 ● PREP 20 MINS ● COOK 5-10 MINS

Easy   1 of 5-a-day

1 small chicken breast
1 tsp olive oil
1 tsp rice vinegar
½ tsp golden caster sugar
Juice of ½ lime
½ small carrot, peeled and grated
2 spring onions, thinly sliced
2½cm piece cucumber, deseeded and sliced
½ red chilli, thinly sliced into rounds
1 sandwich baguette
3-4 Little Gem leaves, washed
1-2 tbsp sweet chilli sauce

- 1 Put the chicken breast between 2 pieces of cling film and bash with a rolling pin to about 1cm thick. Heat a griddle pan until hot. Rub the chicken with the oil, cook for 2-3 mins per side, or until cooked through. Set aside to cool.
- 2 Mix together the rice vinegar, sugar and lime juice, stirring until the sugar is dissolved. Add the carrot, spring onions, cucumber and chilli.
- 3 Split a sandwich baguette along the top. Stuff with the Little Gem leaves and shred the chicken on top. Pile on the carrot mixture and wrap or place in a plastic box. Put the sweet chilli sauce in a small portable pot and when it's time for lunch, pour over the sauce just before tucking in.

PER SERVING 439 kcal, protein 32g, carbs 61g, fat 7g, sat fat 1g, fibre 5g, sugar 18g, salt 1.6g >>

Pizza pasta salad



Black bean
chimichurri salad

Japanese-style
bento box



Vietnamese
chicken baguettes
(Banh Mi)

New ideas
for your
teenager

Satisfying recipes for adults

Avoid that mid-afternoon slump by packing foods that help to balance blood sugar. The B group of vitamins and chromium are important for this, so include wholegrains and lean meats as well as tomatoes, potatoes and onions. Combining protein and fibre with carbs will also help to get you through the afternoon.

Aim to

✓ **Fill up on fibre** by adding grains such as barley or pulses (including lentils) to soups – both help manage cholesterol levels.

✓ **Vary the bread you use** by opting for granary, rye, pumpernickel or seeded varieties of wraps, rolls, bagels or pita. Omit the butter or spread when using moist fillings in sandwiches to help keep fat and calories down.

Slash salt levels by using low-sodium stocks in soups and opt for rice, pasta or potato salads

in place of sandwiches at least 2-3 days a week. If you love sandwiches, choose lower-salt fillings such as chicken or turkey salad.

✓ **Make the most of leftovers** – these save time, money and can offer a healthier choice (eg cold, sliced frittata served with a green salad).

✓ **Be good to your heart** and include oily fish once a week – choose from sardines, salmon, trout or mackerel.

✓ **Choose a healthy snack** to get you through the day – a handful (30g) of unsalted nuts or seeds are full of stress-busting nutrients.

Avoid

✗ **Sweets, chocolate and biscuits** – use fruit or dairy options to satisfy that 'sweet' need.

✗ **Too much tea and coffee** – opt instead for water, 100% fruit juice, milk, a yoghurt smoothie, green or herbal teas.

Great
choices to
take to
work



Fattoush

SERVES 2 ● PREP 15 MINS ● NO COOK

Easy

2 tomatoes, chopped into chunks

¼ cucumber, deseeded and sliced

½ red onion, sliced

1 small head Romaine lettuce, shredded

Handful of mint leaves, roughly chopped

Handful of parsley leaves, roughly chopped

2 pitta breads

1 tsp sumac

FOR THE DRESSING

½ garlic clove, crushed

2 tbsp red wine vinegar

1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Juice ½ lemon

1 The night before, toss together all the salad ingredients except for the pitta bread and sumac. Make up the dressing and season to taste. Leave these separate until the morning.

2 The next morning, toast the pitta breads until lightly golden. When cool, tear into pieces and combine with the salad and dressing. Spoon into 2 plastic boxes and sprinkle over the sumac.

PER SERVING 358 kcals, protein 12g, carbs 57g, fat 18g, sat fat 1g, fibre 6g, sugar 10g, salt 1.1g

Scandi salmon salad

SERVES 2 ● PREP 15 MINS ● COOK 20 MINS

Easy

400g baby new potatoes, halved

1 lemon

2 salmon fillets (about 250g)

150ml half-fat crème fraîche

½ pack dill, finely chopped

½ pack flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped

1 tbsp French mustard

½ red onion, finely chopped

100g radishes, quartered

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Boil the potatoes in a large pan of salted water. Bring to the boil and cook for 15 mins, or until tender. Drain and set aside to cool.

2 Meanwhile, zest the lemon, set the zest aside and thinly slice half the lemon. Put the salmon on a baking sheet, season and top with the lemon slices. Roast in the oven for 12-15 mins, until just cooked through. Leave to cool.

3 Mix together the crème fraîche, dill, parsley, mustard, the reserved lemon zest and one squeeze of the remaining lemon half. Toss together the cooled potatoes with the onion, radish and dressing. Flake over the salmon and season. Take the part-squeezed lemon half with you to squeeze over just before eating.

PER SERVING 526 kcals, protein 31g, carbs 41g, fat 26g, sat fat 10g, fibre 4g, sugar 8g, salt 1g





Moroccan chickpea soup

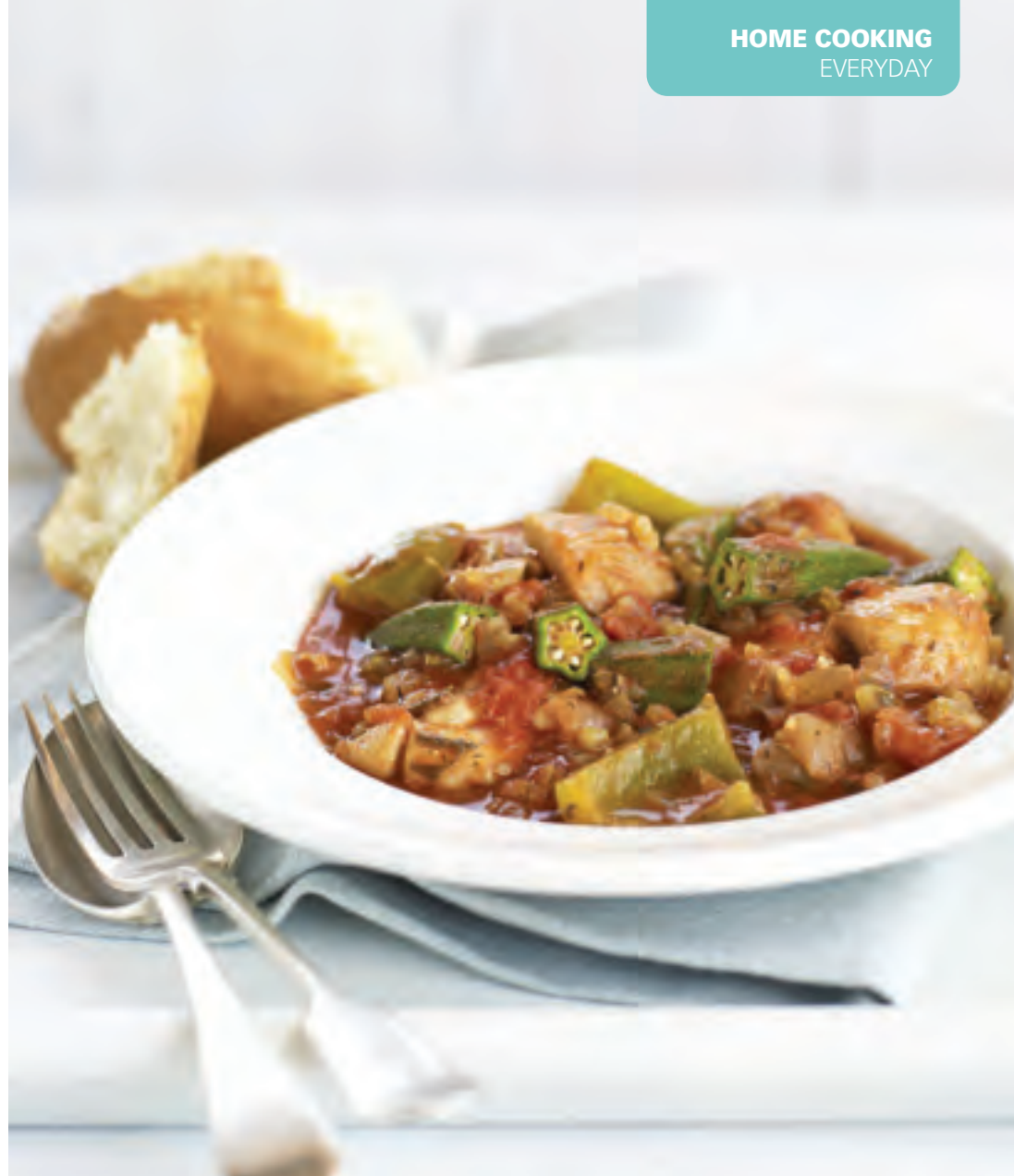
SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 25 MINS

Easy  Low fat  3 of 5-a-day  Good for you

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 red chilli, deseeded and roughly chopped
- 1 tbsp grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp ras el hanout
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- 200g roasted red peppers, from a jar
- 2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
- 400ml vegetable stock
- 400g can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 preserved lemons, rind chopped (discard the pulp and seeds)
- 1 tbsp clear honey
- 50g wholewheat couscous

1 Heat the oil in a large lidded pan. Add the onion and garlic, put on the lid and cook for 5 mins, stirring halfway through. Stir the chilli, ginger, cumin, ras el hanout and cinnamon into the pan and cook for 1 min. Add the peppers, tomatoes and stock. Bring to the boil, turn down to a simmer, put on the lid and cook for 10 mins. **2** Blitz the soup with a stick blender, or in a food processor until smooth. Return to the pan and add more liquid to thin the soup, if you like. Stir in the chickpeas, preserved lemons, honey and some seasoning. If eating straight away, add the couscous and heat through for 5 mins. (If taking to work, add the couscous just before reheating).

PER SERVING 211 kcals, protein 9g, carbs 32g, fat 5g, sat fat 1g, fibre 6g, sugar 12g, salt 1.3g



Chicken gumbo


SERVES 4 • PREP 25 MINS • COOK 35 MINS

Easy  Low fat  Vit C  2 of 5-a-day  Good for you

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 500g skinless, boneless chicken thighs, cut into chunks
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 green pepper, deseeded and chopped
- 3 celery sticks, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 heaped tbsp plain flour
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 400ml chicken stock
- 100g okra, sliced into 2cm rounds

Small handful of sage, leaves chopped
Crusty bread or microwave rice, to serve

1 Heat the oil in a large pan over a medium high heat. Add the chicken and cook in batches for about 5 mins to brown all over. Remove the chicken with a slotted spoon and set aside. **2** Add the onion, green pepper and celery to the pan, put on the lid and cook for 5 mins, stirring occasionally until softened a little. Stir in the garlic, spices, thyme and bay leaf and cook for 1 min until fragrant. Return the chicken and any juices to the pan with the flour, stirring to coat everything. Pour in the tomatoes and stock, and bring to the boil, cook for 5 mins, then add the okra and half the sage. Turn down to a simmer, put on the lid and cook for 10 mins. Then season and serve, scattering the rest of the sage over.

PER SERVING 242 kcals, protein 33g, carbs 12g, fat 7g, sat fat 2g, fibre 4g, sugar 6g, salt 0.7g 



Easy school days!

CREATIVE, NUTRITIOUS, AND SIMPLE IDEAS FOR BENTO-STYLE LUNCHBOXES THAT HAVE SOMETHING SWEET AND SAVOURY FOR YOUR KIDS TO ENJOY – AND NOT A SANDWICH IN SIGHT! FOOD ENVY IN THE SCHOOL YARD GUARANTEED!



Reem Haroun is the founder of Oushe Bakeshop and Café and mother of two children aged eight and five. Oushe bakeshop focuses on fresh, high quality ingredients in their cakes, brownies and catering menus, which feature on-the-go light and nutritious snacks, and children's party boxes. An expert on feeding kids well, here she shares five complete lunchboxes for five days of the week, using mix-and-match items and make-ahead dishes.

SUNDAY

Labneh sushi rollsSERVES 1 ● PREP 5 MINS ● NO COOK **Easy**

Cut the crusts off **1 slice of bread** and flatten with a rolling pin. Spread **1 labneh square** on half of the flattened bread and place $\frac{1}{2}$ **julienned tomato** and **1 julienned cucumber** on the labneh. Roll tight and cut into 2 inch rolls.

PER SERVING 113 kcals, protein 4.6g, carbs 16.2g, fat 3g, sat fat 1.3g, fibre 1.1g, sugar 3.4g, salt 0.6g

Pasta pesto salad

SERVES 1 ● PREP 5 MINS

● COOK 15 MINS **Easy**

Combine **16 tbsp boiled pasta**, **2 steamed broccoli florets**, and **1 tbsp basil pesto**, with a **pinch of salt and pepper** to taste.

Can be made up to 2 days ahead.

PER SERVING 286 kcals, protein 9.5g, carbs 46g, fat 6.9g, sat fat 0g, fibre 10g, sugar 3.2g, salt 0.6g

Shortbread cookie

MAKES 6 ● PREP 5 MINS

● COOK 15-20 MINS **Easy**

Sift **100g all-purpose flour** with **90g softened butter** on a medium setting for 5 mins. Beat **45g sifted confectioners' sugar** with the flour on a low setting, one part at a time. Dust a pinch of flour onto **45g dark raisins** and then press into the dough. Wrap in wax paper and chill for 1 hr. Preheat the oven to 150C. Allow the dough to warm slightly; knead for 1 min and roll out on a lightly floured board to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thickness. Cut with cookie cutters and chill for 30 mins before baking. Bake for 14-20 mins at 180C.

Can be made ahead and kept in an airtight container for up to a week.

PER SERVING 208 kcals, protein 2g, carbs 24.3g, fat 12.2g, sat fat 7.8g, fibre 0.8g, sugar 10g, salt 0g

Apple crisps

SERVES 1 ● PREP 8-10 MINS

● COOK 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ HRS **Easy**

Pre-heat the oven to 100C. Core **1 Granny Smith apple** and with a mandolin slicer, slice to make thin round strips. Place on a non-stick tray covered with baking paper and sprinkle **1 tsp granulated sugar** (optional). Bake for 2 hrs and set aside to cool for 1 hr.

Can be made ahead.

PER SERVING 96 kcals, protein 0g, carbs 26.2g, fat 0g, sat fat 0g, fibre 5g, sugar 21.2g, salt 0g >>

Carrot coins

MAKES 6-10 coins ● PREP 3-5 MINS

● NO COOK **Easy**

Slice **1 carrot** into round coins and cut **50g cheddar** block to the same thickness as the coins – about 1-2 cm thick. Using a small cookie cutter, cut out the middle of each carrot, and with the same cutter, cut the cheese. Fit the cheese cut-outs snugly in the carrot holes.

PER SERVING 230 kcals, protein 13g, carbs 6.8g, fat 16.7g, sat fat 10.5g, fibre 1.8g, sugar 3.2g, salt 0.9g



MONDAY

Vegetarian spring rolls •

SERVES 1 • PREP 5 MINS

• NO COOK **Easy**

Spread **1 tbsp plum sauce** in a very thin layer, on **2 rice paper sheets**. Julienne **¼ carrot**, **½ small cucumber** and **3 tbsp bean sprouts**, and place the shreds on one side of the rice paper sheet. Roll tightly and tie each roll with **half a spring onion**.

PER SERVING 93 kcals, protein 2g, carbs 19g, fat 0g, sat fat 0g, fibre 1.5g, sugar 8g, salt 0.6g

Veggies and dip •

SERVES 1 • PREP 5 MINS

• NO COOK **Easy**

Combine **1 tbsp labneh spread** with **1 labneh square** and place in a dipping container. Slice **1 medium carrot to 16 pcs** and **2 celery stalks to 8 small pcs**, and place in the box.

PER SERVING 108 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 11.5g, fat 4g, sat fat 2.3g, fibre 3g, sugar 7g, salt 0.5g

Chicken and sweet corn sushi bites

SERVES 1 • PREP 5 MINS • NO COOK

Easy

Cut the crusts of **1 slice of wholemeal bread** and flatten using a rolling pin. Combine **3 tbsp steamed or boiled chicken**, **1 tbsp sweet corn** and **1 tbsp mayonnaise** and add a **pinch of salt** and **pepper** to taste. Spread the mixture on half of the flattened bread, roll tightly and cut into 2 inch rolls.

PER SERVING 205 kcals, protein 10g, carbs 14.5g, fat 11.7g, sat fat 1.7g, fibre 1g, sugar 1.5g, salt 0.2g

Chicken and cheddar skewers

MAKES 2 SKEWERS • PREP 5 MINS

• NO COOK **Easy**

Slice **1 ciabatta bread** in half, and cut out small squares from the top and bottom part of the bread.

Spread **1 tsp mayonnaise** on the bread squares, and place one square on a skewer. Add **1 slice of roasted chicken breast** folded in half, **1 slice of tomato**, **1 cucumber slice**, **1 slice of cheddar cheese**, and finish with another square of bread.

PER SERVING 173 kcals, protein 11g, carbs 15g, fat 7.8g, sat fat 3g, fibre 0.7g, sugar 0g, salt 0.5g

Add a banana, handful of blueberries and carrot coins to make a complete meal.

Coleslaw salad

SERVES 1 • PREP 5-10 MINS

• NO COOK **Easy**

Combine **¼ (4 tbsp) white cabbage**, **¼ (4 tbsp) red cabbage**, **½ (4 tbsp) shredded carrots**, **5-6 Granny smith apple slices**, **½ tbsp mayonnaise**, **1 tsp olive oil** and **½ tsp mustard**. Season with a **pinch of salt** and **pepper** to taste.

PER SERVING 148 kcals, protein 0.6g, carbs 15g, fat 9.7g, sat fat 0.7g, fibre 2g, sugar 9.5g, salt 0.7g

TUESDAY

Grape and cheddar skewers

MAKES 2 SKEWERS

● PREP 3 MINS

● NO COOK **Easy**

Assemble a skewer by alternating **2 seedless grapes** with **2 cheddar cubes** on each skewer.

PER SERVING 87 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 2g, fat 6.6g, sat fat 4.2g, fibre 0g, sugar 1.5g, salt 0.3g

Pasta and chicken salad

SERVES 1 ● PREP 8-10 MINS

● COOK 10 MINS ● **Easy**

Combine **16 tbsp boiled pasta**, **3 tbsp steamed and shredded chicken breasts**, **1 tbsp mayonnaise**, and **1 tsp oil**. Add a **pinch of salt and pepper** to taste.

PER SERVING 390 kcals, protein 15.7g, carbs 43g, fat 16.8g, sat fat 1.7g, fibre 2.5g, sugar 0.8g, salt 1.7g

WEDNESDAY**Cucumber coins**

MAKES 8-10PCS ● PREP 5 MINS

● NO COOK **Easy**

Slice **cucumber** into thick rounds, and **50g cheddar cheese** block to the same thickness as the cucumber – about 1cm thick. Cut the middle of the cucumbers with a cookie cutter, and then cut out the cheese in the same size. Fill the cheese into the holes of the cucumber.

PER SERVING 209 kcals, protein 12.7g, carbs 1.7g, fat 16.7g, sat fat 10.5g, fibre 0, sugar 1.2g, salt 0.8g

Jelly bites

MAKES 2 PCS ● PREP 5 MINS

● NO COOK **Easy**

Place **1 tbsp fruit jam** in the middle of a bread slice – do not spread. Fold the bread slice over and use a cookie cutter to cut out the edges into a round shape. Crimp the edges with a fork. You could also use an empanada maker for this, trimming off any extra bread at the end.

PER SERVING 117 kcals, protein 2g, carbs 25.7g, fat 0.8g, sat fat 0g, fibre 0.6g, sugar 13g, salt 0.4g

THURSDAY**Cheesy sticks**

MAKES 3-4 STICKS ● PREP 5 MINS

● COOK 15-20 MINS **Easy**

Preheat the oven to 205C. Roll out **80g store-bought pizza dough** to about ½ inch thickness. Brush **1 tsp melted butter** all over and sprinkle **1 tbsp parmesan cheese**, followed by **5 tbsp mozzarella cheese**. Bake for 15-20 mins and cut into strips using a pizza cutter.

PER SERVING 387 kcals, protein 17.2g, carbs 50g, fat 14g, sat fat 8g, fibre 1.6g, sugar 0g, salt 1.4g

Add carrot coins and a mixed berry skewer to make it a complete meal.

Turkey and cheddar skewers

MAKES 2 SKEWERS ● PREP 5 MINS

● NO COOK **Easy**

Slice **1 ciabatta bread** in half, and cut out small squares from the top and bottom part of the bread. Add **1 tsp mayonnaise** to the square, and place one square on a skewer. Add **1 slice of smoked turkey breast**, **1 slice of tomato**, **1 slice of cucumber**, a slice of **cheddar cheese**, and another square of bread.

PER SERVING 173 kcals, protein 11g, carbs 15g, fat 7.8g, sat fat 3g, fibre 0.7g, sugar 0g, salt 0.5g **GF**

Well dressed!

There are few ingredients that can't be incorporated into a satisfying salad. These imaginative recipes are delicious, nutritious and beautiful. Recipes
CASSIE BEST Photographs
DAVID MUNNS

Incredible flavours
and textures

Roasted grape, carrot & wild rice salad with balsamic maple dressing

SERVES 6 ● PREP 20 MINS ● COOK
45 MINS **Easy**   **1 of 5-a-day** **Gluten Free**

200g brown basmati & wild rice mix
300g baby carrots, peeled
250g red seedless grapes,
picked from the stalk
1 tbsp extra virgin olive or
rapeseed oil
200g green beans
100g bag pecans
2 good handfuls rocket leaves
200g pack feta, crumbled into
chunks

FOR THE BALSAMIC MAPLE DRESSING

2 tbsp maple syrup
3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
Juice of ½ a lemon
2 tbsp extra virgin olive or
rapeseed oil


1 Cook the rice following pack instructions. Meanwhile, heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Place the carrots and grapes on a large baking tray, keeping the grapes at one end and the carrots at the other (the grapes will bleed some of their juice onto the tray, which will stain the carrots). Drizzle the carrots with the oil and season. Roast for 10 mins, then remove from the oven and set aside to cool a little. When the rice is cooked, drain and run under the cold tap to cool a little, then set aside to drain completely.

2 Bring a saucepan of water to the boil, add the beans and cook for 2 mins or until just tender. Drain and set aside to cool a little. In a large bowl, whisk the dressing ingredients together with some seasoning. Add the rice, carrots, beans, pecans, rocket and half the feta, and toss everything together. Transfer to a serving plate, then scatter over the remaining feta and the roasted grapes. Drizzle any juice from the baking tray over the salad and serve.

PER SERVING 446 kcals, protein 11g, carbs 43g, fat 25g, sat fat 6g, fibre 5g, sugar 16g, salt 1.3g

**Superfood salad
with citrus dressing**

SERVES 6 • PREP 25 MINS

COOK 5 MINS **Easy**    **Low cal****Folate** **Fibre** **2 of 5-a-day** **Gluten Free** **250g purple sprouting broccoli, cut in half (or into bite-sized chunks)****175g frozen soya beans****2 ripe avocados****250g quinoa, cooked****100g baby spinach****Handful of soft herbs (parsley, basil, coriander or mint all work well), chopped****100g pomegranate seeds****100g pumpkin seeds, toasted in a dry pan until they pop****FOR THE CITRUS DRESSING****Zest and juice of 1 lemon or lime****Zest and juice of 1 orange****1 tbsp white wine vinegar****2 tbsp Dijon mustard (or gluten-free alternative)****2 tbsp extra virgin rapeseed oil**

1 Bring a saucepan of water to the boil and fill a large bowl with ice-cold water. Add the broccoli to the pan and cook for 2 mins, then add the soya beans and cook for 1-2 mins more until the broccoli is cooked but still has a bite. Drain and drop the vegetables straight into the cold water – this quickly cools them, retaining their bite and bright colour.

Leave for 1-2 mins until cool, then drain and leave in the colander while you prepare the remaining ingredients.

2 Dry the large bowl. Add the dressing ingredients with some seasoning and whisk together. Halve, stone and peel the avocados, then cut into chunky dice and add straight to the dressing (this will stop the avocado turning brown). Add the quinoa, spinach, herbs, half the pomegranate and pumpkin seeds, and the cooked vegetables to the bowl, and gently toss everything together. Transfer the salad to a serving platter, scatter with the remaining seeds and serve.

Any leftovers will keep in the fridge for lunch the next day.

PER SERVING 349 kcals, protein 13g, carbs 22g, fat 23g, sat fat 3g, fibre 8g, sugar 6g, salt 0.9g >>

Leftovers will make a delicious packed lunch



Asian lamb & grapefruit noodle salad with ginger dressing

SERVES 6 • PREP 20 MINS

• COOK 10 MINS **A little effort** **Low cal**

Vit C

Vegetable or sunflower oil, for frying, plus a drizzle

3 banana shallots, thinly sliced, then divided into rings

3 lamb leg steaks (about 400g in total), fat trimmed

2 large pink grapefruits

1 cucumber, peeled into ribbons with a vegetable peeler, centre discarded

1 red chilli, thinly sliced

Small bunch of mint, leaves picked

Small bunch of coriander leaves

200g rice noodles, cooked following pack instructions

FOR THE GINGER DRESSING

Thumb-sized piece of ginger, peeled and finely grated

2 tbsp soy sauce

2 tbsp rice wine vinegar

1 tbsp soft brown sugar

2 tsp toasted sesame oil

1 Heat enough oil in a medium saucepan to come halfway up the

sides. Test if the oil is hot enough by dropping in a ring of shallot; it should sizzle and brown within about 30 secs. Fry the shallots in batches until golden brown. Remove with a slotted spoon, drain on kitchen paper, season with salt and set aside.

2 Heat a large frying pan until hot. Rub the lamb with a little oil and some seasoning. Cook for 2-3 mins on each side for medium (depending on the thickness of the lamb), then transfer to a plate, loosely cover with foil and leave to rest for 5-10 mins.

3 Meanwhile, cut away the peel from the grapefruits using a small fruit knife, then cut into segments catching the juices over a large bowl. Add the segments to the bowl along with the dressing ingredients and gently mix. Add the cucumber, chilli, herbs, noodles and any resting juices from the lamb. Toss everything together, making sure all the ingredients are coated in the dressing, then pile onto a serving plate. Cut the lamb into thin slices and place on top of the salad, scatter over the shallots and serve straight away.

PER SERVING 331 kcal, protein 15g, carbs 38g, fat 12g, sat fat 5g, fibre 2g, sugar 10g, salt 1.1g



Smoked mackerel & beetroot salad with creamy horseradish dressing

SERVES 6 • PREP 30 MINS

• COOK 45 MINS **Easy** **Low cal** **Folate**

Iron **Omega-3** **1 of 5-a-day** **Gluten Free**

6-10 beetroots (depending on size)

140g Puy lentils, cooked

Bunch of spring onions (about 8), thinly sliced on an angle

1 eating apple, core removed, thinly sliced (squeeze a little lemon juice over to prevent them turning brown)

1 small radicchio, leaves separated and torn into bite-sized chunks

250g smoked mackerel, skin and any bones removed, flaked into chunky pieces

FOR THE HORSERADISH DRESSING

Zest and juice of 1 lemon

150ml soured cream

2 tbsp creamed horseradish

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Place the unpeeled beetroots on a baking tray and roast for 35-50 mins, depending on their size. Give them a gentle squeeze after 35 mins – if they feel tender and are a little shrivelled, they are done; if not, continue cooking. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool.

2 Using a small sharp knife, carefully peel the beetroots, then cut into wedges (wear plastic gloves to prevent them staining your hands). Mix the dressing ingredients in a small bowl. Put the lentils, spring onions, apple, radicchio and mackerel in a large bowl, add half the dressing and toss everything together. Pile the ingredients onto a serving platter, layering with the beetroots as you do. Serve with the remaining dressing on the side.

PER SERVING 312 kcal, protein 16g, carbs 19g, fat 19g, sat fat 6g, fibre 5g, sugar 7g, salt 1.1g

▲SERVING TIP

Don't save your big turkey platter for Christmas! To show off the lovely ingredients in your salad, dig out your biggest platter and scatter the ingredients over it, then let everyone get stuck in.

**Chicken garden salad
with elderflower dressing**

SERVES 6 • PREP 25 MINS

• COOK 5 MINS **Easy** **Low cal****Folate** **2 of 5-a-day** **Good for you** **Gluten Free**

Bunch of asparagus (about 8 spears),
woody ends removed and
discarded (or save to make soup),
cut in half lengthways

200g pack sugar snap peas

140g fresh or frozen peas

1 small cooked chicken, skin and
bones discarded, meat shredded

250g radishes (use mixed colours and
shapes if you can), sliced

1 red onion, halved and thinly sliced

1 large curly round lettuce or

2 Little Gems, torn

Handful of pea shoots (optional)

FOR THE ELDERFLOWER DRESSING

2 tbsp elderflower cordial

2 tbsp white wine vinegar

Zest and juice of 1 large lemon

3 tbsp extra virgin rapeseed oil

1 Bring a medium pan of water to the boil and fill a large bowl with ice-cold water. Drop the asparagus into the pan. After 1 min, add the sugar snaps. After another 30 secs, tip in the peas. Cook for 30 secs more, then drain and tip the vegetables into the icy water – this will cool them quickly, helping to keep their bite and vibrant colour. After 1-2 mins, drain and set aside in the colander while you prepare the other ingredients.

2 Dry your bowl, pour in the dressing ingredients with plenty of seasoning and whisk together. Add the chicken, radishes, onion, cooled and drained vegetables, and the lettuce, and gently toss everything together until well coated in the dressing – the easiest way is to use your hands. Pile the salad onto a large platter and scatter over the pea shoots, if using. Serve straight away.

PER SERVING 415 kcals, protein 50g, carbs 11g, fat 19g, sat fat 4g, fibre 4g, sugar 9g, salt 0.4g **GF**

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
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Kitchen notes

Nutrition advice,
cooking tips and
product picks for
your pantry.



Tabletop gardening

Don't have the space to grow a fruit and vegetable garden? Click and grow, a smart plant box is the answer, and you don't even need a green thumb! The compact box allows you to grow basil, chilli pepper, tomatoes, and strawberries – capsules are available for each – on your kitchen counter, or even a work

desk. Each plant box has a growth medium, a nanotech material which supplies oxygen, water and nutrients to plant roots, and LED lights that offer sufficient light to grow with six watts of energy, keeping electricity bills low! Click and grow is available as a herb garden, starter kit, or individual plant boxes from Dhs359 at Virgin Megastores.

The perfect soup bowl

Soup is such a convenient lunch item – especially if you make it in big batches over the weekend and freeze it. Here are three smart tips to help you make the perfect frozen soup:

- * Undercook vegetables and pasta, so that when you re-heat it, they still have a good bite.
- * Use brown or wild rice instead of white – it freezes better.
- * Add cheese and herbs only after re-heating soups.

Look what we found!

3 great new products for your kitchen



This San Pietro a Pettine truffle oil takes pizza and pastas to the next level. Dhs175 at Sapori di Bice.

Pack the all-new mango or vanilla flavoured Yoplait Petit Filous yoghurt, in your child's lunchbox – it's free from preservatives, additives, colours and sweeteners. Dhs2.50 at Spinney's outlets.



The new flavonoid-rich Brooke Bond Red Label tea is now available in round teabags with a unique Osmo-filter for quick infusion, in flavours such as strawberry, apple and black raspberry. From Dhs3.50, at leading supermarkets.



Reader tip of the month

When filling a piping bag, place the bag in a tall glass and then pour the mixture into it slowly, to avoid spillage.

- Nabilah Khan



Got a great tip you want to share?
Get in touch with us on facebook or twitter



SMART FOOD SWAPS

 204 calories	Swap for	 172 calories
 114 calories		

Ham and cheese white bread sandwich (146 grams)

1 slice of mild oak smoked salmon on a slice of toasted rye bread

Health update> FOODS TO ENHANCE FOCUS

As school season begins again, it's vital for children and adults to get the right amount of vitamins and nutrients to help sustain energy levels throughout the day, and increase concentration levels. Begin the day with a kale smoothie, as the superfood is packed with manganese which helps increase focus. Add pineapples, which have Vitamin C, to make the smoothie more palatable for children. For lunch, have salmon as it is high in Omega 3 and improves mood levels, and vegetables like lycopene-rich tomatoes which protect brain fats and help cognitive functioning. Pumpkin seeds are a great snack as they are rich in zinc and help boost memory.

Flavours of the Med

Bring a touch of the Mediterranean to your cooking. This collection of light, fresh dishes will take you through the rest of the warmer weeks with ease. Recipes SARAH COOK Photographs DAVID MUNNS



Slow-roast tomato
Tatin – vegetarian
main course

Food styling sarah cook and CASSIE BEST | Styling marny cadogan

Gorgeous with just
some crusty bread
and a cheeseboard

Slow-roast tomato Tatin

SERVES 6 ● PREP 20 MINS ● COOK 50

MINS **Easy**   **1 of 5-a-day** 

25g butter

Splash of good olive oil

800g medium and small mixed
tomatoes, halved across
the middle and seeds roughly
scooped out

1 tbsp light soft brown sugar

1 tbsp red wine vinegar

1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves or
oregano, plus extra to serve

375g block all-butter puff pastry

Plain flour, for dusting

1 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Melt the butter with a splash of olive oil in your widest frying pan. Add the tomatoes, skin-side down, in a single layer (you can do this in 2 batches if they won't all fit) and cook over a low heat until they release their juices. Lift out with a slotted spoon and rearrange in a tart tin (roughly 23cm), skin-side down – cram them in as they will shrink a little and you don't want any gaps. Add the sugar and vinegar to the pan, and cook until the pan juices are reduced and syrupy. Drizzle over the tomatoes in the tin, then scatter with the oregano or thyme and season.

2 Roll the pastry out on a lightly floured surface to a good 25-26cm round. Lay on top of the tomatoes, and tuck the edges down. Use a fork to prick holes all over the pastry – this will help the steam to escape.

3 Sit the tart tin on a flat baking tray and bake for 30 mins or until the pastry is golden brown and crisp. Let the tart sit for 10 mins, then run a knife round the edge to release the pastry. Carefully flip the tart over onto a serving plate or board and scatter with more herbs to serve.

PER SERVING 307 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 29g, fat 19g, sat fat 9g, fibre 2g, sugar 8g, salt 0.6g



Garden tomato salad

SERVES 6 FOR A STARTER OR LUNCH,
OR 8-10 WITH OTHER DISHES ● PREP
20 MINS PLUS 2-3 HRS CHILLING

● NO COOK **Easy**   **Low fat**  **Folate**  **Vit C** 

1 of 5-a-day  **Good for you**  **Gluten Free** 

Use quality produce and keep things simple – all you need is a few fresh herbs, and a well-balanced dressing to boost the natural sweet-sour flavour of the tomatoes.

1.25kg-1.5kg ripe tomatoes – in as many colours, shapes, sizes and flavours as you can find

50g mixed soft herbs – we used chives, thyme, parsley and mint

5-6 shallots, diced as finely as you can

FOR THE DRESSING

3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

3 tbsp white wine vinegar

1 tbsp clear honey

1 Slice the large-to-medium tomatoes and halve the smallest.

2 Pick the leaves from the herbs and roughly chop, then mix the herbs with the shallots.

3 Choose a large platter and start layering up the tomatoes, mixing colours and sizes. As you finish each layer, scatter with some of the herb shallot mix and some ground black pepper. Keep layering until everything is used up. Cover and chill for a few hrs. Bring to room temperature 45 mins before serving.

4 Whisk together the dressing ingredients with some salt, then drizzle over the salad and serve.

PER SERVING (6) 110 kcals, protein 2g, carbs 11g, fat 6g, sat fat 1g, fibre 4g, sugar 10g, salt 0.1g >>



Great on its own or as part of a lazy lunch

Griddled aubergine salad with sultanas & pine nuts

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS

• COOK 30 MINS **Easy** **V** **Folate** **Fibre**

1 of 5-a-day **Gluten Free**

3 aubergines, sliced into 1cm rounds

Olive oil, for brushing
200ml Sherry vinegar
100g clear honey

50 sultanas
Small pack flat-leaf parsley, chopped
50g toasted pine nuts
Pot of Greek yoghurt, to serve

1 Heat a griddle pan or a barbecue. Brush the aubergine slices with some

olive oil, season, then griddle the slices in batches, turning when they are charring and tender. Watch the heat so that they don't char before they soften. Remove to a large serving platter and leave at room temperature until serving. **2** Put the Sherry vinegar and honey in a small pan, and bring to a simmer. Throw in the sultanas and bubble for 5-10 mins until reduced a little – it will thicken up more on cooling. Set aside until ready to serve.

3 Drizzle the syrupy dressing all over the aubergines, scatter with parsley and pine nuts, and serve with a bowl of Greek yoghurt.

PER SERVING 314 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 36g, fat 16g, sat fat 2g, fibre 12g, sugar 35g, salt 0.2g



Big breakfast courgette & potato rösti

SERVES 4 • PREP 20 MINS

• COOK 35 MINS **Easy** **V** **P** **Folate**

400g potatoes, grated
200g courgettes, grated
3 spring onions, finely sliced
4 eggs and 1 yolk
2 tbsp plain flour
Little sunflower oil and butter, for frying
8 rashers of your favourite bacon
Tomato ketchup or chutney, to serve

1 Put the grated potatoes and courgettes in a clean tea towel and squeeze out as much water as you can. Tip into a bowl with the spring onions, egg yolk, flour and plenty of seasoning. Mix well.

2 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Put a little oil and butter in a frying pan. Divide the mixture into 4 flat röstis and add to the pan (fry as many as you can fit in your pan at once). Cook over a medium heat for 6-8 mins until the underside is crisp and brown, then flip over and cook the other side. When they're cooked, transfer to a baking parchment-lined tray and put in the oven.

3 While the röstis are finishing off in the oven, fry the bacon in the pan, then transfer to the oven, too. Finally, fry the eggs to your liking, then serve with the courgette röstis, crisp bacon and a good blob of tomato ketchup or chutney.

PER SERVING 277 kcals, protein 13g, carbs 25g, fat 14g, sat fat 4g, fibre 3g, sugar 2g, salt 0.3g

So easy!
All cooked in
one tray



Amatriciana chicken traybake

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 MINS

• COOK 1 HR

1 long red chilli
3 tbsp tomato purée
3 tbsp olive oil
3 garlic cloves
8 skinless chicken thighs
500g new potatoes
4 thyme sprigs
140g cubetti di pancetta
(or smoked bacon lardons)
400g tomatoes, half cherry or baby plum, the rest is up to you – any larger ones halved
Green salad and bread, to serve (optional)

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Find a large roasting tin that will hold the

chicken thighs and potatoes in a single layer. Halve the chilli, scrape out and discard the seeds if you don't like it too hot, and remove the stalk. Put in a small food processor or mini chopper with the tomato purée, olive oil and garlic. Whizz to a paste, then spread over the chicken. Add the chicken and potatoes to the tin with a good grinding of black pepper and some salt, then mix everything together well with your hands. Add the thyme and roast for 30 mins.

2 Stir in the pancetta and roast for 15 mins more, then add the tomatoes and roast for another 15 mins until the tomatoes have softened and the chicken is cooked. Serve straight from the pan and eat with a green salad and some bread, if you like, for mopping up the juices.

PER SERVING 472 kcals, protein 46g, carbs 27g, fat 20g, sat fat 5g, fibre 4g, sugar 6g, salt 1.5g



Spanish stuffed peppers

SERVES 8 AS A STARTER,
OR 4 AS A LUNCH OR LIGHT SUPPER

• PREP 20 MINS • COOK 1 HR

4 red peppers
150g pack cherry or baby plum tomatoes (we used a mixture for their colour)
½ ciabatta loaf, or similar, cut into 2.5cm chunks
3 fat garlic cloves, thinly sliced
140g chorizo, cut into chunky slices
4 tbsp Sherry vinegar
4 tbsp good-quality olive oil
Pinch of caster or granulated sugar
Parsley (optional) and more crusty bread, to serve

1 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Halve the peppers through the stalk, then cut out and throw away the seeds. Sit the peppers snugly, cut-side up, in a casserole dish, or two if needed. Halve any larger tomatoes, then divide them, the bread chunks, garlic and chorizo between the dishes.

2 Drizzle over the vinegar, then the olive oil, and season with pinches of sugar, sea salt and ground black pepper. Bake for 30 mins, covered, until the peppers are tender and collapsing a little. Remove, uncover and cook for a further 30 mins. Leave the peppers to cool a little, then scatter with parsley, if you like, and spoon onto plates, scooping out any extra juices. Serve with crusty bread for mopping up the juices.

PER SERVING (4) 363 kcals, protein 12g, carbs 31g, fat 21g, sat fat 5g, fibre 6g, sugar 14g, salt 1.0g >>

No-cook dessert
with the wow factor



Sunshine tiramisu

SERVES 8 • PREP 25 MINS PLUS A
FEW HOURS CHILLING • NO COOK

Easy  


2 medium eggs, separated
50g caster sugar
250g tub mascarpone
150ml pot double cream
125ml Marsala wine
175g pack sponge fingers
400g mix of nectarines and peaches,
stoned and diced
50g crunchy amaretti biscuits

1 Use an electric whisk to beat the egg yolks with half the sugar until the mixture is pale and moussey – this will take 3-4 mins. Beat the mascarpone in a large mixing bowl to loosen, then beat in the double cream until just combined. Scrape in the mousse mixture and beat everything together until smooth and light.

2 Clean the beaters, then whisk the egg whites in another bowl until stiff peaks hold on the end of the beaters. Tip in the remaining sugar and beat until glossy and stiff again. Use a big metal spoon to stir a third of this into the cream mixture, then gently fold in the rest.

3 Get your serving dish or bowl ready, then put the Marsala in a shallow plate and dip in a few sponge fingers at a time so they are just soaked but not soggy. Layer half of the fingers evenly in your dish, then scatter over half the fruit. Top with half the cream mixture, then crumble over half the crunchy amaretti biscuits. Repeat the layers, but finish with the cream and save the other half of the biscuits. Cover and chill for a few hrs, or overnight.

4 To serve, crumble over the remaining biscuits, then spoon into bowls.

PER SERVING 435 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 35g, fat 28g, sat fat 17g, fibre 2g, sugar 27g, salt 0.1g 

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Learn to: Joint a chicken



Tunga Zvenhamo, executive chef of Barcelos Dubai, shows us an expert way to cutting a whole chicken, to get the most out of it while keeping all the pieces intact. Try this flavourful Portuguese-style recipe with the chicken breasts, and use the rest of the cuts in other dishes. Photographs ANAS CHERUR



South African Tunga Zvenhamo began his career in his hometown, Cape Town, where he worked with the Sheraton and Hilton hotels. He moved to Dubai three years ago to head the kitchens of Barcelos Dubai.

Chicken picante

SERVES 2 • PREP 15-20 MINS PLUS
CHILLING • COOK 15MINS **Easy**

2 chicken breasts (around 200g each)
40g picante pepper, finely chopped
40g cream cheese
60g feta cheese
40g bread crumbs
Grilled mixed vegetables,
to serve with (optional)
Potato wedges (optional)
Peri peri sauce (optional)
FOR THE PERI-PERI MARINADE
18g paprika
1 tbsp hot chilli powder
2-3 tbsp fresh lemon juice
1½ garlic cloves, minced
½ tsp fresh ginger, chopped
½ tsp salt

- 1 Mix together the finely chopped peppers with the cream cheese and feta cheese. Add the bread crumbs to bind together.
- 2 Once the mixture is ready, spoon about 1/3 of the cheese mixture in the centre spit of the chicken breast and roll. Tie gently with a thread.
- 3 Mix together the marinade ingredients and marinate the stuffed chicken in this sauce – cover with cling wrap and refrigerate for 3 hrs.
- 4 Score the chicken breast on top.
- 5 Grease a grill and pre-heat.
- 6 Grill for 15 mins or until cooked through – turning and brushing often with the sauce.
- 7 Serve the chicken with grilled vegetables, peri peri sauce and potato wedges, if you like.

TIP Thighs, breast and drumsticks are the most easy-to-use chicken parts and the ones you probably cook with most often, whether it's in a curry, casserole or barbecue. When buying a whole chicken, use the back to make stock. And if you're buying the chicken with the insides, use the liver for a stir-fry and gizzards for a stew.



1 Pat the chicken dry with a paper towel and slice the skin near the drumstick and thigh with a sharp knife.



2 Bend the bone connecting the thigh with the rest of the body backwards with your hands and loosen it gently.



3 Slice the leg away as close to the body as possible, along the loosened bone; be careful not to cut into the bone



4 Bend the chicken between the drumstick and thigh to reveal the line of fat. Slice the chicken along the line of fat to separate the thigh from the drumstick.



5 Separate the wings by holding the body firmly and pushing it back and forth. Slice the wings through the loosened skin.



6 Hold the remaining body of the chicken from the top and slice horizontally through the middle – starting from the neck.



7 Slice away the whole chicken breast carefully just over the rib cage.



8 Press down the chicken breasts and apply a bit of pressure to flatten the cartilage. Cut the chicken breasts in half, through the middle.



9 Slowly slice along the cartilage on the inside edge of each breast – using it as a guide. Remove the bone, the wishbone will come out too. [Gf](#)

Cooking with kids: Chicken satay



Help children learn key skills and watch how much more they enjoy eating something they've made themselves!

Cheeky chicken satay

MAKES 12 • PREP 30 MINS

• COOK 10 MINS **Easy** **Low fat**

UNCOOKED

Small piece of ginger

2 garlic cloves

Zest and juice of 1 lime

1 tsp clear honey

1 tbsp soy sauce

1 tbsp mild curry powder

3 tbsp smooth peanut butter

500g pack skinless chicken breast fillets

165ml can coconut milk

1 tsp vegetable oil

Cooked rice and lime wedges, to serve

FOR THE CUCUMBER SALAD

1 cucumber

2 tbsp white vinegar

1 tbsp golden caster sugar

Sweet chilli sauce (optional)

Bunch of coriander, leaves picked (optional)

PER SKEWER 117 kcals, protein 12g, carbs 4g, fat 6g, sat fat 3g, fibre 1g, sugar 3g, salt 0.3g

Fun to make
and eat



1 Make a marinade

Peel and finely grate the ginger. Tip into a bowl. Repeat with garlic and lime zest. Juice the lime, mix with honey, soy, curry powder and peanut butter. Add a splash of water if too stiff. Spoon two-thirds into a small pan.



2 Now for some bashing!

Put the chicken in a sandwich bag, one breast at a time, getting your child to flatten each one with a rolling pin or a meat mallet – this isn't essential, but they like doing it!



3 Mix the chicken and marinade

Cut the chicken into strips, tip it into the remaining third of the peanut-butter mix, then get your child to stir well. Cover with cling film and chill until required. *This can be done up to 3 hrs ahead.*



4 Cook your tasty sauce

While the chicken is marinating, pour the coconut milk into a pan and stir together with the peanut butter mix. Heat gently and stir. *Suitable for confident seven- or eight-year olds, under adult supervision.*



5 'Sew' chicken onto skewers

The chicken needs to be threaded into 'S' shapes onto skewers. Get your child to thread them away from themselves. Younger ones might find this fiddly, so they could just push on small chunks.



6 Paint the tray with oil

Heat the grill to high and get your child to brush a baking tray with oil. They can then line up the skewers on the tray. Grill the skewers for about 10 mins, turning occasionally, until lightly charred.



7 Make cucumber ribbons with a peeler

Using a swivel-blade peeler, get your child to carefully peel the cucumber into a bowl, then carry on peeling the cucumber flesh into ribbons until they get to the seeds. Repeat with each side of the cucumber.



8 Mix up a dressing

Get your child to mix the vinegar and sugar until the sugar dissolves. Add the sweet chilli, if using, then pour over the cucumber. Add coriander if your child likes it. To serve, put the skewers on a platter, the sauce and salad in bowls, and serve with rice and lime wedges. **GF**

WHAT CAN THEY DO?

- **Aged two** Basic tasks such as whisking, mixing with a wooden spoon or greasing a tray or tin.
- **Aged four** Roll meatballs, dip food in breadcrumbs, layer a lasagne, top and smooth a pie with mash, rub together a crumble mix.
- **Aged six** Chop ingredients with a butter knife and make basic cakes from start to finish.
- **Aged eight** Stir a simmering sauce or work at the hob – as long as they are well supervised by an adult.
- **Aged 10** Place baking trays in the oven and remove hot trays with the use of oven gloves.

A month of



Crunchy peanut banoffee sundae



Whizz-choc-pop super sundae

sundaes

Ice cream sundaes are enjoying a revival! No longer a treat just for kids, these indulgent new recipes will make even the most grown-up of gourmets giddy with delight. Recipes CASSIE BEST Photographs PETER CASSIDY

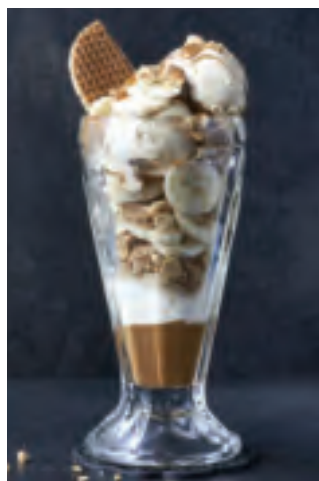


Pineapple & coconut sundae



Lighter breakfast Knickerbocker Glory

>>



Crunchy peanut banoffee sundae

SERVES 2 • PREP 5 MINS

● COOK 5 MINS Easy 🔪

3 tbsp canned caramel
1 tbsp smooth or crunchy

peanut butter
1 tbsp milk
2 scoops toffee or caramel ice cream
2-4 scoops vanilla ice cream
1 large banana, sliced
1 heaped tbsp roughly chopped salted peanuts
1 caramel wafer, halved

Heat the caramel, peanut butter, milk and a pinch of salt in a saucepan, whisking until smooth. Divide half the warm sauce between 2 sundae glasses. Layer the remaining ingredients in the glasses, finishing with another drizzle of sauce, a sprinkling of peanuts and a caramel wafer.

PER SERVING 733 kcals, protein 14g, carbs 87g, fat 37g, sat fat 19g, fibre 3g, sugar 72g, salt 1.0g



Pineapple & coconut sundae

SERVES 2 • PREP 5 MINS

● COOK 5 MINS Easy 🔪 1 of 5-a-day 🍷

200g tub prepared fresh pineapple
50ml coconut liqueur, such as Malibu
1 tbsp golden caster sugar
4 ginger nut biscuits, crumbled
4 scoops coconut ice cream
Handful of dried sliced coconut or desiccated coconut

Dried pineapple rings, to decorate (optional, see below)

Put the pineapple, coconut liqueur and sugar in a pan. Cook over a high heat for 5 mins until syrupy and the sugar has dissolved, then cool for 5 mins. Crumble a ginger nut biscuit into each sundae glass and top with the syrupy pineapple. Layer the remaining ingredients on top, finishing with dried coconut and a dried pineapple ring.

PER SERVING 488 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 67g, fat 14g, sat fat 11g, fibre 2g, sugar 59g, salt 1.4g

DRIED PINEAPPLE RING

Heat oven to 140C/120C fan. Peel and thinly slice a small pineapple into rounds – the thinner the better. Use a small, sharp knife to remove the core from each slice, then place on baking trays lined with baking parchment. Bake for 35-40 mins until dried out and lightly golden. *Will keep in a sealed container for up to 1 month.*



Whizz-choc-pop super sundae

SERVES 2 • PREP 5 MINS

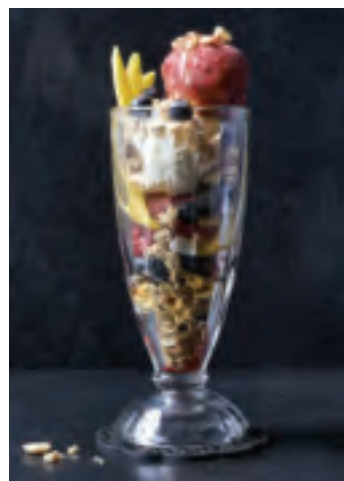
● COOK 5 MINS Easy 🔪

65g milk chocolate buttons
Splash of milk

Handful of toffee flavoured popcorn (or any other flavour)
2 scoops of chocolate ice cream
2-4 scoops of vanilla ice cream
Handful of raspberries
Popping candy (optional)
2 chocolate cigarillos (optional)

Gently heat the chocolate buttons and milk in a pan, stirring, until melted and saucy. Divide between 2 sundae glasses, saving a little for the top. Add the remaining ingredients, finishing with the reserved chocolate sauce, some popcorn, popping candy and a chocolate cigarillo.

PER SERVING 489 kcals, protein 8g, carbs 60g, fat 25g, sat fat 15g, fibre 3g, sugar 55g, salt 0.5g



Lighter breakfast Knickerbocker Glory

SERVES 2 • PREP 5 MINS

● NO COOK Easy 🔪 Vit C 1 of 5-a-day

4 tbsp granola
Handful of blueberries
2 tbsp clear honey or maple syrup
2-4 scoops raspberry sorbet
1 small ripe mango, peeled and sliced
2 scoops of frozen natural yoghurt

Divide the granola between 2 sundae glasses (save a little for the top). Layer the berries, honey, sorbet, mango and frozen yoghurt on top, then finish with a final sprinkling of granola, and a drizzle of honey.

PER SERVING 414 kcals, protein 7g, carbs 74g, fat 9g, sat fat 3g, fibre 4g, sugar 59g, salt 0.2g GF

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IN THIS SECTION

* What is your child eating at school? **P70** * Meet Greg Malouf, global ambassador of Middle Eastern cuisine **P78** * British restaurateur Mitch Tonks' tells us why he needs three fridges in his home kitchen! **P82** * We witness Poland's gastronomic resurrection, **P90**



Food Lessons

With obesity and health issues on the rise, it's important to instill good eating habits in children from a young age – not just at home, but in school too. With a new Dubai school launching a campaign to promote good food habits in their students, in partnership with celebrity chef Gary Rhodes, we take a look at what needs to be done to educate children on eating well. By Nicola Monteath.

Try to recall what you ate in your school lunches – was it healthy? Canteen lunches have long been gaining a bad reputation around the world, and while most schools here don't mandatorily serve breakfast and lunch, most have a canteen that don't always offer healthy, or even enjoyable, food options for children.

"Children today tend to be fussy eaters and as a result, parents struggle to make them eat a good balance of the right foods. By providing tasty, high quality meals in school and being very positive and encouraging about food, we are able to introduce children to foods that they would not normally try," says Samantha O'Grady, Home Economics teacher at Foremarke School, the Dubai school which recently launched the Festival of Rhodes campaign aimed at promoting eating fresh, wholesome food amongst their students.

Children need to be educated on the importance of eating well, and by introducing them to healthy food that is tasty as well, educators will be able to teach them how vital wholesome food is for their growth and wellbeing. And this effort needs to begin at a grassroots level. Jamie

Oliver's revolutionary Feed me better campaign which involved altering and promoting healthy eating habits in schools in Britain had made headlines the world over. Jamie wanted to show parents what their kids were eating at schools, and prove that nutritious, wholesome food could be made with as little as 37 pence per meal. Michelle Obama has also recently launched the Lets Move campaign, with the aim to fight obesity in children in the US.

In 2011, Dubai Municipality introduced a ban on foods that are high in calories and sugar, contain artificial preservatives, and have a poor nutritional profile, being sold in school canteens. They have also set up guidelines that aim to educate schools on nutrition and calorie requirements for each age

group. The ban has been implemented in a few government as well as private schools, but an informal poll around our office revealed that it is far from being the universal standard in all schools here at the moment.

One private school, however, has taken the initiative, shifting the focus from calorie-conscious eating to high quality, wholesome food, with celebrity chef, restaurateur and TV personality, Gary Rhodes, at the helm. Gary introduced the Festival of Rhodes, a three-week course at Foremarke School this summer, to promote high-quality produce, and organic ingredients (where possible) in traditional, healthy school meals. Gary has long been a campaigner for better standards in school meals, which makes his





Gary Rhodes

“It’s very important to teach children the importance of eating well from a young age.”

of nutrition. The focus of introducing nutritious meals using high-quality produce in schools is not only to educate children on healthy eating, it is also to help them lead a healthier lifestyle and lower the risk of lifestyle related diseases and eating disorders later on in life.

While not all schools have the facilities to grow an organic garden, or have a fully-fledged canteen with hot meals served, schools that do call in catering companies can and should choose those which offer a range of nutritious lunch items, instead of those that offer fried, or unhealthy fatty foods. Many parents prefer packing a meal for their children, as they believe that canteens which do serve hot dishes don’t offer nutritious items and skimp on the quality of ingredients in meals. However, that is not always possible for busy working parents who don’t have a choice but to hand over lunch money to their children, so school canteens should make sure that the food they serve has age-appropriate carbohydrates, proteins, fats, minerals and vitamins – all made with fresh ingredients. Dishes should also be alternated every week, in order to see children’s response. Also, since schools in this region are home to a number of nationalities, canteens can offer a wide range of ethnic foods as well, so that children can try out other delicacies and introduce it to their family as well.

Stephanie Karl, a nutritionist at JTS Medical Centre, who specialises in teenage eating disorders and food intolerances and allergies, states that canteens should offer carbohydrates like rice, potato, bread and cereal along with protein (of the same size), and swap white refined flour for durum wheat or freshly ground wholemeal flours. She also recommends using butter, coconut or olive oil, rapeseed, avocado, nut and grape seed oil instead of canola, corn, and sunflower or soy oils. Meats rich in Vitamin D and Omega 3s should be either of the grain or corn fed varieties.

When teaching children about what to order in school, ask them to choose wraps with vegetables and proteins, fresh salad with meat or chicken, or corn tortillas, if on offer. Telling your five- or ten-year old to buy a vegetable wrap with chicken >>

entry into the school’s food system a positive move. In a three-week trial period to launch this programme, Gary spent time planting an organic garden with the children and conducting cooking classes, to teach them about where food comes from and how to cook from scratch. Starting with the new school term this month, the school canteen will start to serve a menu that he has created. He hopes to take this sort of an initiative to other schools as well.

“It’s important to teach children the importance of eating well from a young age. Healthy eating doesn’t necessarily mean diet food – it’s all about wholesome, high-quality ingredients,” says Gary.

“Foremarke will see a return to traditional school meals. Hearty soups, seasonal salads,

mouthwatering mains and puddings – all the food will be cooked in a healthy manner and will be sourced from locally grown organic ingredients. With this exercise, children may see their friends eating like this and follow suit,” says Samantha.

Dr. Abdulla Al Karam, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Director General of KHDA (Knowledge and Human Development Authority) also agrees. “We encourage schools to support teachers and students to lead a healthy lifestyle, so that we can all be even happier in work and studies,” he says.

Giving them what’s best

Healthy eating in children isn’t necessarily about eating low-fat or low-calorie food, but more about eating fresh, unprocessed food with natural sources



might be hard, but teach them that if they do buy this, they will have more energy to play, and that the food will increase their focus, to help them learn faster, and then it will make sense to them.

Eating healthy also doesn't mean going without or missing out on sweet treats. Instead of fried sweets or doughnuts, a naturally sweet snack or dessert is a healthier alternative – think chocolate mousse made with avocado, dates, cacao and almond milk, as well as a raw pistachio ice cream bar or berry and banana sorbet, which are all delicious and nutritious too. All these can be made free from preservatives and artificial colouring if quality ingredients are used. "It's nice to treat children every now and then, as long as the portion sizes are small," says Gary, who recommends an apple crumble with custard or ice cream for dessert.

Nutritionally wise

Stephanie tells us that a balanced diet used to be about eating a little bit of everything, but these days children can be picky, as tastes have changed dramatically due to the exposure of industrially manufactured convenience foods, which are more widely available than fresh and wholegrain foods. "One of the biggest tasks as parents and teachers is getting back to basics and learning to use simple, raw ingredients, whole-grains, artisan breads, and good fats, at least 80 per cent of the time," explains Stephanie.

"At Foremarke we have established our own organic garden and have also re-introduced cooking instructions back into the curriculum with children from as young as four years old cooking in classes with older children, to cook and prepare full meals," Samantha says.

By cooking healthy at home and tuning a child's taste buds by adding good quality, nutritious foods to their diet, and by showing them how food is made as well as asking them to help with cooking, you might find it easier to teach them the

importance of eating right, while making it a fun learning experience. Parents can also show children ingredient labels when food shopping and tell them what's bad for them (E numbers, artificial colouring and preservatives) – children tend to pick up this advice at a young age.


Many children can also be addicted to the taste or textures of certain foods like milk, cereal and cheese, and Stephanie tells us that parents should keep food addictions in mind, when packing school lunches, and advising them about food from the canteen. "These foods have a pleasant opioid (psychoactive chemical that resembles morphine) effect and while it may calm the brain down, it causes inflammation or systemic sensitivities that alter behaviour and learning," says Stephanie. The correlation between behaviour and food should be noticed, and Stephanie suggests rotating the food, along with similar alternatives, once in a four-day cycle, instead of completely omitting it from the child's diet.

It is prevalent for most kids in this part of the world to take packed lunches from home, and while home-cooked food can be a lot more controlled, in many cases, parents do not always know exactly how to give them the most nutritious options. When cooking food at home for children, cut down the amount of fructose corn syrup used in dishes, and refrain from store-bought tomato or chilli sauce, and salad dressings packed with artificial colourings, preservatives and sugars. Instead, try and make things from scratch whenever possible. This way your child will learn to tell the difference from good quality ingredients and store-bought varieties.

Snacks at school can be a fresh fruit, yoghurt, protein bar, boiled egg, raw vegetables with hummous, corn crackers with guacamole or salad, and cheese slices or toasties made with wholegrain bread, proving good food doesn't necessarily have

to be expensive. While eating well is key, children also need to keep hydrated throughout the day. A large bottle of water should be kept on every desk, and each classroom should be equipped with water dispensers so that children can help themselves as and when they want. Stephanie recommends milk as well, but suggests staying away from juices with artificial sweeteners and sugars.

To make food interesting for children, parents need to get innovative with presentation too, as do school canteens. Which child doesn't like a panda made out of pancakes and berries, or sandwiches cut in the shape of stars or bears? Creative food art not only adds a sense of humour to meal, but also intrigues children in many ways, making them willing to try out something new, making it a great way of introducing new vegetables, fruits, grains and proteins into their diet.

At the end of the day, it isn't an easy job to get children to eat healthy, but the important thing to remember is, if the food is tasty, they are more likely to accept it. And it isn't hard to make fresh, wholesome food taste good. It just needs a concerted effort between parents and educators to ensure that our kids are getting the best nutrition they can. 

NUTRITION HOME-SCHOOLING HERE ARE A FEW WAYS PARENTS CAN EDUCATE CHILDREN ABOUT HEALTHY EATING AT HOME:

Portion control Teach them not to stuff themselves if they are already full, as it might make them feel lethargic at class.

Stick to the box While it's fine to share with friends once in a while, it's best to teach your child to eat from his/her own lunchbox – especially if they are allergic to certain foods that might be present in another box.

Stay away from junk Give your child a high-quality, homemade burger or pizza from time to time, so that they don't crave it and indulge in unhealthy fast food at school when you aren't around to watch over them.

Snack right Tell them to choose a fruit, yoghurt, or vegetable sticks with hummous over a bag of fried chips, as it is tastier and will keep them full for longer as well – so they won't feel hungry in another few hours.



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The milk debate

Is it good for you, is it bad for you – milk has been a controversial dietary topic in recent years! We ask two nutritionists with opposing viewpoints on the benefits and disadvantages of consuming this dairy product to make their case.



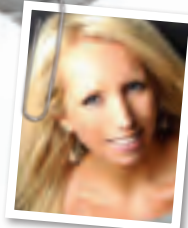
Milk – go for it!

Nancy Bhatia, Chief nutritionist and founder of the Munch Box (A healthy snackbox delivery) and Project Specialist for Houston Methodist Global Healthcare Services, Dubai, is pro-milk.

☛ Milk is the first form of food not only for humans, but also for many other mammals. It has been referred to as a complete food, and its consumption offers many nutritional benefits suitable for everyone, irrespective of gender or age. It has always been a breakfast item in my household, and I usually have it with cereal, as a milkshake or with a dash of cardamom and handful of nuts. Personally, I believe it should be consumed throughout life, unless a person is lactose or dairy intolerant, but I understand it's a concern for those watching calories as one cup of full fat cow's milk contains 8 grams of fat – mostly saturated. But this is why low-fat and skimmed milk options are available to choose from. According to research, consuming cow's milk from childhood lowers the risk of high cholesterol at later stages in life, as your body's metabolism is tuned to it, so there is no longer any risk imposed by consuming milk fats.

Cow's milk not only has a high nutritional value, but also a high level of bio-availability, or the amount of nutrients available for the body to utilise, – cow's milk has 33 per cent of high calcium bio-availability, which is nowhere close to the percentage of calcium availed from calcium-fortified plant-based alternative sources of milk such as soya, almond and coconut. While calcium is important for growing children – the milk fats are beneficial for brain development – it is equally vital for women over the age of 40, as women lose a lot of calcium during menopause, making them prone to osteoporosis. This means children and adults both need to drink milk. Apart from this, cow's milk also contains more tryptophan (an amino acid that helps promote the mood regulating 'happy hormone' serotonin) compared to soy milk; one cup of hot (cow's) milk at night helps relax the brain and induce sleep. Cold milk also helps provide instant relief from acidity. Many athletes consume cow's milk as well, as the whey protein content is higher than other milks, and helps increase metabolism and quick muscle action.

As a nutritionist, I understand that many can be intolerant to milk, or develop an intolerance at a later stage in life, but this isn't linked to drinking cow's milk regularly. Children actually digest lactose very easily, unless they are sensitive to it from the beginning. Apart from being a concern for children, the sugar content and proteins like whey and casein are also a concern for diabetics, however this is why low-fat cow's milk is a good choice as it helps regulate blood glucose. To sum up, cow's milk is not only healthier, but also tastier. The versatile ingredient is easily available, suitable for every budget, and can be used for cooking – I use low-fat cow's milk in dessert, and since it's naturally sweet, I don't add any extra sugar. Cheese, butter and ghee, are some of the by-products of cow's milk which are also used in many cuisines. ☛



Milk – just say no!

Laura Holland, Nutritionist and co-founder of nutrition and wellbeing website, BeUtifulYou.co.uk, is anti-milk.

☛ Cow's milk is known as one of the three white devils in nutrition lingo, the other two being white sugar and white flour. This does sound alarming, and it is, if you are a regular milk consumer – but herein lies the majority of the problem with milk. We have been brought up to think that it's healthy and many of us, especially in the West, have it in large quantities on a daily basis. We are the only species on Earth to drink the milk of another animal, and Mother Nature never intended us to continue drinking milk, cows or our mothers', as a source of nutrition, as our ability to digest it decreases as we get older.

The lactose in milk is difficult to digest for many and can create mucous, bloating and generally a lethargic, heavy feeling in the body. Throw into this mix a concoction of hormones and chemicals fed to dairy cows to unnaturally increase their milk production, and you will realise that it is not quite so innocent!

Cow's milk can be an underlying cause of health issues, more specifically allergies like eczema and asthma, digestive problems, oestrogen dominance, inflammation and serious repercussions for people with osteoporosis. It's known for the development of strong, healthy bones, but it can actually potentially weaken them and worsen osteoporosis. Bones do need calcium, and milk has a lot; however for your body to absorb it you need, among other nutrients, magnesium. The nutritional profile of milk is not conducive to your body absorbing the calcium. It also creates acid for those sensitive to milk – your body will quickly seek to neutralise the acid and will leak alkali minerals, calcium and magnesium, from your tissues and bones, making them weaker.

It is worth noting that in non-milk consuming countries, rates of osteoporosis are extremely low, we essentially find osteoporosis only where we consume milk regularly! Ironically most people worry about the cholesterol and saturated fat in milk, but these are the least of your worries. Yes, it has fat and cholesterol, but milk isn't the root cause of obesity and high cholesterol – ice cream and cheese maybe, but not the actual milk.

In assessing the health and nutrition of anything, the number one question is how well does your body digest it? This is the underlying challenge, and if you don't digest, then stress, toxicity and heaviness are the results. I cut milk from my diet seven years ago, after I made the connection between bloating and challenges with my weight and milk. Once I stopped, my body became much happier, less bloated and easier to manage my weight – food intolerances are a complete sabotage for weight loss! Now I just have a little bit here and there and my body is fine with this. The bottom line is, don't consume it on a daily basis, and limit your intake according to how your body feels. When you do need milk, choose organic, or almond, rice and coconut milks, which are my favourite alternatives! ☛

3's a trend: NORTH AMERICAN BREAKFAST JOINTS

We take a look at some of the most interesting foodie trends in town.

Say Dubai and brunch in the same sentence, and chances are the images that will be conjured up will involve OTT buffets, lots of booze, and overall decadence. Luckily, there is an alternative form of brunch now getting ever more popular – which is brunch as it should be, a casual café style ambience with hearty breakfast dishes. No one does big, indulgent breakfasts better than the North Americans, so we couldn't be happier about the slew of new America-inspired restaurants that have opened up in Dubai, all with a focus on fuss-free, high-quality food. The good news? Most of these places offer all-day breakfasts, or breakfast-style dishes for dinner if you should want it. What's not to love? Here are three of our favourites, which one will you head to next weekend?



Clinton St. Baking Company, Downtown Dubai

We're not big fans of baseless hype here at *BBC Good Food ME*, so when we heard about the queues lining up when this iconic New York eatery opened its rather nondescript doors tucked away on the ground floor of the Burj Views towers, that wasn't enough to impress us. But when you do visit – and yes, months into opening, it is still enjoying the kind of busy success that other restaurateurs only dream of – it's easy to see what the hype is all about. A relaxed, diner-style setting with a picture window into the bustling kitchen,

chalkboard specials menu, a takeaway counter with tempting cakes on display, and warm, friendly service, set the scene for an incredible meal. This is classic, deep-fried American nosh at its artery-clogging best – so don't come here if you're on a diet – but made from scratch with fresh, top-notch organic ingredients, so everything tastes better than most places, and it's also good for you (in a manner of speaking!). A Farmer's breakfast is elevated to a whole other level with a delicious chicken apple sausage accompanying the creamy, chive-topped scrambled eggs, cheese, herb roasted tomatoes and sourdough toast, while even a simple fried green tomato, served with a light, tangy aioli, tastes divine. They are best known for their fried chicken with waffles, and their pancakes, and while Clinton St. is most popular for breakfast over a weekend, who's to stop you from going over for a waffle at dinnertime? If it means beating the hour-long waiting list (they don't accept reservations) – although it is totally worth the wait – it certainly won't be us! *Call 04-4281331.*



The Hamptons Café, Jumeirah

This quaint café, nestled along Jumeirah Beach Road in a beautiful white villa, may be American in theme, but is part of a family-owned Dubai chain of cafés. Split over three floors, the vibe here is casual, warm and friendly, giving you the sense of dining at someone's house or waking up early for breakfast when on holiday – in the Hamptons, naturally! The décor is carefully designed with white-washed walls, elegant armchairs in grey and white, wooden tables and framed posters to recreate this feeling. It's packed on Friday mornings with ladies who breakfast, and families catching up over appetising dishes including soft gooey truffle-coddled free-range eggs with crunchy toast soldiers – the truffles adding an instant hit of umami – accompanied by prosciutto-wrapped asparagus and mouthwatering Portobello mushrooms topped with cheese, freshly baked croissants, and Montauk eggs (free-range eggs with smoked salmon, baby spinach and caramelised onions on Portobello mushrooms), a gluten free option. The focus is on fresh produce, and you can also find lunch items like quiches, seafood pie, buttermilk fried chicken, and gourmet sandwiches such as Wagyu burger and burrata crostini. Their rose icing croissant – which has been creating a buzz on social media already – is a must-try for those with a sweet tooth.

Call 04-3317979.

Eggspectation, The Beach Mall, Jumeirah Beach Residence

The giveaway is in the name – this Canadian import is a celebration of all things eggs, but it's also so much more than that. Located in the family friendly strip mall that is The Beach, this restaurant makes the most of its waterfront location with floor-to-ceiling glass windows flooding the trendy interiors (think exposed faux brick feature walls and retro oversized bulb light fixtures) in sunlight, as well as alfresco seating. As the name suggests, there are no dearth of eggs on the menu – there's a whole page dedicated to just eggs benedict, with creative versions like poached eggs served on avocado instead of a muffin, all made with their homemade hollandaise. Elsewhere, a variety of omelettes – the lobster omelette, served with their signature Lyonnaise-style sautéed potatoes (and oddly enough, some fruit) is divine – waffles, and pancakes vie for your attention. There's also a range of salads, burgers, pasta, a really good selection of flatbreads, and even steak on offer, making this as suitable for lunch or dinner as it is for breakfast. Whatever meal you're having, don't miss their signature Smores French toast – a fluffy brioche bun doused in Nutella and melting marshmallows – as dessert. With kids running around inside and out, and the many attractions of JBR footsteps away, we can't think of a better place to spend a Friday morning with the family. On the other hand, kids eating there on weekdays between 2pm and 5pm get a 15 per cent discount too. *Call 04-4307252.* [@](#)





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twitter page [www.twitter.com/dubaivineweek](https://twitter.com/dubaivineweek)



african+eastern
INSPIRING GREAT BLENDS





INTERPRETER OF RECIPES

Australian celebrity chef and now Dubai restaurateur Greg Malouf tells Sudeshna Ghosh how he went from not even being able to spell 'chef' to becoming a world renowned ambassador of Middle Eastern cuisine, reinterpreting the traditional for modern palates.

He doesn't look the part at all. With his twinkling eyes, wide smile and portly demeanour, mild-mannered Greg Malouf resembles a benevolent grandfather more than he does a globe-trotting celebrity chef. But don't be fooled, underneath that kindly exterior lies an astute, creative brain and skilled pair of hands that have singularly transformed the perception of Middle Eastern cuisine in the western world.

Coming from a Lebanese immigrant family, the traditional Middle Eastern flavours were something he'd grown up with. With a childhood surrounded by aunts, grandmothers and great grandmothers all coming together to cook, share and eat on special occasions, Greg was always surrounded by good food. Although back then, he was barely allowed into the kitchen, let alone being given an opportunity to cook. "I had a massive appetite, I think that's what brought me into cooking. Whenever I entered the kitchen, I'd pick at whatever they were making," he confesses. "So, I'd usually be given a few little treats and ushered away."

But it wasn't a direct transition from this wholesome childhood picture into chef's whites. From never having created anything more complicated than putting things together from the fridge, at 16, Greg, who had reached a crossroads in his young life, decided he wanted to cook. He ran away from home in Melbourne to Sydney, leaving a note with a friend saying he "wanted to collect his thoughts and become a chief (sic)".

Sure enough, he came back to join the William Angliss Institute, a specialist centre for culinary training, completing a four-year course in three, while simultaneously doing an apprenticeship in a Mexican restaurant in Melbourne. The moment he put his chef's jacket on, he "loved it" and knew this is what he's meant to be doing. While he doesn't credit his mother for influencing his 'Modern Middle Eastern' culinary style – "she made regulation Lebanese food; my dad, who cooked on Sundays, was much more experimental," he says – cooking skills must have been running through his DNA, as otherwise, his brother wouldn't have turned into a successful

restaurateur in Melbourne as well; he owns the family-run Zum Zum restaurant in Melbourne.

Keeping it personal

In fact, his parents weren't very happy with his career choice at that time – being a chef wasn't as glamorous in Australia in the early 90s, as it is now – but they came around when they saw he was happy. And his success could have had something to do with it as well. Which he self-deprecatingly credits to largely being at the right place at the right time. “I was doing things that were fairly unusual for that time, food journalists got wind of that and started following my career, the momentum gained from there,” he says.

These unusual things include things like making kibbeh with salmon and putting watercress in tabbouleh – “My mum was in disbelief,” he laughs – with the over-arching intention of bringing Western techniques and flair into Middle Eastern cooking. He describes his culinary philosophy thus: “Taking Middle Eastern food and best of Western techniques, and reinterpreting the dishes of my childhood.”

Having worked in Europe and also Hong Kong throughout the 80s, he honed his skills to come back to open his first contemporary Middle Eastern restaurant, Momo, in Melbourne in 1991 which rapidly garnered two hats from the Australian Good Food Guide (Australia's equivalent of Michelin stars). Since then, there's been no looking back. With six books and two successful restaurants – he left MoMo in Melbourne to work in the UK at Petersham Nurseries Café, Richmond, during which time the restaurant was awarded a Michelin star – under his belt, he has established himself as one of the world's foremost experts on Middle Eastern cuisine.

And now he appears to have come full circle,

styles of menus – a la carte, a sharing/banquet menu, and a mezze menu. It will be high-end fine dining, combined with a lounge area and an outdoor area with shisha and daybeds. “I think it sits between high-end and accessible,” he says. Which makes it quite a unique proposition to start with.

Then there's the food he's known to serve up. Although he's led by his Lebanese palate, he has travelled extensively around the region to acquaint himself with the nuances and differences of each cuisine. “There's a common thread running through, from Persia to North Africa – one of generosity. The other is the aromatics and spices that originate from the spice trade routes,” Greg says. “However, each country has a different way of doing things – the way a dish is spiced, and even the way they are eaten. One needs to have respect for these differences.”

Middle Eastern deconstructed

Celebrating and respecting these differences is something Greg has done successfully with his cookbooks, which he has been co-writing with his (now) ex-wife Lucy Malouf, who he continues to share a good working relationship with. *Arabesque* (Hardie Grant books), their first book, was published in 1999, and since then, with books like *Saha: A chef's journey through Lebanon and Syria* (Quadrille publishing), *Moorish* (Hardie Grant books), *Turquoise* (Chronicle Books) and *Saraban* (Hardie Grant books), he not only chronicles the culinary traditions of the larger Middle East region, but also brings a refinement to it that opens it up to a wider audience.

“Most of the cuisines in this region are peasant or street food, it's food of the homes. Turkey is the exception, Ottoman cooking is of the palaces,” he says. Bringing European refinement to this home-style cooking is his particular brand of modernism.

lot of time trying different ways to present a dish, but I spend even more time thinking about taste.”

“My process is that I take a dish, go through the ingredients, take something out, and substitute it for something else,” he continues. “I pull dishes apart and reconstruct them in a new way. It's a lot of trial and error.”

Errors are something that Greg isn't afraid to admit to or learn from, having endured his fair share of failures in the early stages of his career. “When you're younger, you tend to put a lot of things on a plate, and flavours can get out of balance,” he says. “When I came back to Australia in 1991, I had a lot of ideas, and wanted to express what I learnt, and draw some of my heritage into it. Luckily, I learnt about restraint at an early age.” Restraint is something young chefs often lack, he observes. “New chefs need to understand they can go on a great journey, putting a bit of their character and personality into their dishes,” he says. “At the end of the day, food is about putting a bit of yourself on a plate.”

Greg continues to put a bit of himself out there not just in the plates he serves at restaurants, but also through his cookbooks. His next one is due out in November this year, which will focus on Middle East vegetarian cooking. “It will be elaborate, contemporary and with lots of pulses, legumes, grains, and spices,” he promises. Spices are something he has a particular passion for, evident from his particularly delicate use of them in his cooking; he has a high-quality spice mix range of his own, Malouf's spice mezza, that he will be retailing at his Dubai restaurant too. Then, there's another book, which he describes as a travel cookbook, scheduled for 2015, which will be focused on the Arabian peninsula.

After cookbooks, a natural step for most chefs seems to be TV. But the soft-spoken Malouf isn't interested. Although he's had TV appearances to judge various competitions and so on, doing his own TV show is “just not my thing,” he says. “I enjoy being in the kitchen a lot more.” And after all, between his books and restaurant projects, he needs a bit of time to do the favourite part of his job. Which is: “Dreaming... about putting dishes together.” >>

“I take a dish, go through the ingredients, take something out and substitute it for something else.”

having moved lock, stock and barrel to Dubai, to work on a new restaurant in DIFC – slated to throw open its doors soon. “I've always wanted to cook in the Middle East. When I was offered this project, I thought, there's a part of the world I'd like to live in,” he explains.

This decision can appear to be in equal measures logical, as well as bold. After all, there are more Middle Eastern, particularly Lebanese, restaurants here than you can shake a bowl of hummous at. What does he bring to the table (pun unintended!) that's different? His new restaurant, will have three

“It's food of the region as seen through my eyes,” he muses aloud.

Which then brings presentation into the picture. Something he has a knack for. “The visual aspect is very important of course,” he says. “If something looks scruffy on a plate, you're already on a wrong foot with the customer.” However, for someone who spends many sleepless nights thinking about presentation, Greg understands the importance of substance over style. “You've got to think flavours first, then find an attractive way to present it,” he says. “I spend a

GREG'S GO-TOS

- **Comfort food:** “Roast goose noodle soup.”
- **Last meal on earth:** “Arous labneh – Arabic bread with labneh, thyme, mint leaves, rolled up and eaten.”
- **Fave dish:** “Raw minced lamb. It's simple but needs to be made with impeccable ingredients.”



SIGNATURE RECIPES

Pigeon bistayeea

SERVES 8 (MAKES 4 LARGE PIES) 🍷

6 Squab pigeons, about 400g each (can be swapped for duck or chicken legs, cook until they are tender)

100 ml olive oil

3 medium onion, finely chopped

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

1 tsp ground ginger

8 threads saffron, lightly roasted and crushed

1 tsp cinnamon

1 tsp ground cumin

1 bullet chilli, seeded and finely chopped

60 ml sherry

1.2l chicken stock

4 eggs

Handful of parsley leaves, finely shredded

handful of coriander leaves, finely shredded

12 sheets of filo pastry

150g melted clarified butter

100g flaked almonds, fried in vegetable oil and drained

50ml canola oil

100g icing sugar sifted with 20g cinnamon powder

Sea salt

Freshly milled white pepper

1 Wash the pigeons and pat them dry with kitchen paper. Remove the legs and breasts, and season with salt and pepper.

2 Heat half the oil in a heavy pan and sauté the pigeon pieces until golden brown. Add the onions, garlic, ginger, saffron, cinnamon, cumin and chili, adding more oil if necessary. Stir so

the pigeon is well coated with spices.

3 Add the sherry and stock, bring to the boil, then lower heat and simmer for 45-50 minutes, or until the pigeon is tender. When cool enough, remove the meat from the pigeon, discarding skin and bones, and shred it coarsely.

4 Reduce the poaching liquid by a half and then add the eggs and whisk until well combined. Pour this mixture into a small saucepan, season and scramble over gentle heat until creamy and nearly set. Stir in parsley and fresh coriander, and check seasonings. Then allow the mixture to cool completely. Stir the meat into the egg mixture and refrigerate until ready to use.

5 To make the filo pies, work with one sheet of pastry at a time. Lay one sheet on the work surface and brush with melted butter. Fold in half then with another sheet repeat the same. Brush one sheet with butter and lay the other sheet across to form a cross. Place the filo cross in the base of a small black pan pushing the filo into the sides. Scatter with 2 teaspoons of fried almonds then spoon on the meat-egg mixture till it is level with the top of the pan. Brush the top of the filo with melted butter and then bring the surrounding pastry sides up and over the filling to make a flat surface. Refrigerate until ready to bake.

6 Place pan in the centre of an oven, preheated 190C and bake for 15 minutes until golden brown. Place a metal skewer on a naked flame and heat until glowing red-hot. Remove the pan from the oven and turn out the pie from the pan to a plate and sprinkle with cinnamon and icing sugar mix. Score with a scorching hot skewer to form a pattern of your liking. Serve immediately.

Salmon kibbeh 'nayee'

SERVES 4

100g fine burghul

90g white onion, roughly chopped

1 long green chilli, seeded and roughly chopped

Small handful of basil leaves, roughly chopped

Small handful of mint leaves, roughly chopped

Small handful of flat-leaf parsley leaves, roughly chopped

½ tsp salt

Freshly ground black pepper

¼ tsp chilli powder

300g lean lamb, roughly diced

3 ice cubes

Extra-virgin olive oil

1 Soak the burghul for 5 minutes in just enough cold water to cover it. Drain it well through a sieve, then tip it into a tea towel and squeeze out as much water as you can. Tip into a mixing bowl.

2 Put the onion, chilli and fresh herbs through a mincer – it will come through as a green slush. Add to the burghul. Stir in the salt, a few grinds of pepper and the chilli powder.

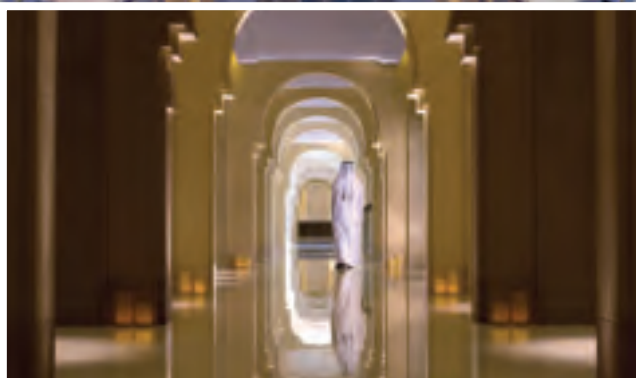
3 Roughly chop the meat, then put it through a mincer twice.

4 When you're ready to serve, add the meat to the burghul mixture with the ice cubes. Mix well with your hands. As the ice dissolves, it will bind everything together into a smooth, sticky paste. Tip onto a plate and spread into a smooth, shallow layer reaching right up to the rim. Use the back of a soup spoon or a knife to decorate the surface in a diamond pattern, and drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil. Serve with extra oil, Arabic bread, fresh onions and mint leaves. 🍴





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Eastern Mangroves Hotel and Spa by Anantara is the ultimate getaway for those looking for a break surrounded by nature, in the UAE capital. The hotel overlooks a protected mangroves district, and is a great destination for those who enjoy sunbathing by the pool, paddle boarding through the mangroves, treatments at the spa, and feasting on a selection of mouthwatering cuisines.

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Lounge and the **Pool Deck** offering coffees and pastries, and refreshing juices and bites respectively.

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How many dining options are available at Eastern Mangroves Hotel and Spa by Anantara?

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MY KITCHEN

Mitch Tonks

Chef and restaurateur Mitch Tonks gives Holly Brooke-Smith a tour of his busy quayside kitchen in Brixham, UK. Photographs GEOFF WILKINSON

Former accountant Mitch Tonks took the plunge into food in 1995 and opened a fishmongers in Bath, UK. Soon after, he opened his first FishWorks restaurant above the shop, and by 2006 had a chain of 13 successful restaurants, mainly in London.

After the company was floated, he opened The Seahorse in Dartmouth to critical acclaim. Mitch also owns three RockFish restaurants – one in Bristol and two on the Devon coast. He lives in nearby Brixham with his wife, Penny, and their youngest daughter, Issy.

What brought you to Brixham?

We've been here seven years. I wanted to be close to the suppliers to ensure I got the right products for our restaurant. We just fell in love with Brixham – we walked past the house one day and thought, 'that's where we want to live'.

Well, you couldn't be much closer to the fish supply!

Brixham's fish market is amazing, it's got 30-40

different species every day, which is fantastic. The talk of the pub is always fish – prices, quality, if anything special has been landed.

At night, you can see the fishing boats coming home, so in the summer I watch them come in, then go to the quay with a carrier bag and get a handful of sprats.

How is your kitchen designed?

I made sure that one side of the kitchen is where all the prep is done, and the refrigeration is in one place, too. I've got two deep Hotpoint fridge drawers, so there's a lot of space. I would have liked to have some water and a sink on the same side as the work surface, but we would have lost the corner cupboard space. The table is from Habitat; I love big tables.

What do you cook on?

I cook in the oven and on gas hobs. I did look at induction, but I like fire – that's what it's all about. In our previous kitchen we had a range cooker with a fire, but the trouble is when you cook all

that stuff indoors there's a lot of smoke. Unless you've got a real fire (which is what I originally wanted in here, but we couldn't find a way to do it), it's not the same, so we keep all the real fire outside!

What does that include?

We've got a grill out the back and I have a wood oven as well. In summer, we open the big doors and cook outside. I've got a smoker going out on the front this summer to smoke fish and I'm just about to build a charcuterie fridge, with a humidifier in it, to hold the temperature at 12-13°C with humidity – that will be to cure pork and do sausages and meats.

Do you make lots of ingredients from scratch?

Curing fish is the future – I love it! I smoke my own bacon as well: just a bit of salt, sugar and spices rubbed into belly pork, then vacuum-pack and put in the fridge for three weeks, then slice. We make yogurt, too – it's very easy and I get real



Clever built-in shelves create more storage space



Some of the cupboard doors fold up to create space



Mitch likes clear storage jars. 'My wife laughs but I like to put labels on everything.'

pleasure out of it. If we're having people over, sometimes I'll make mozzarella in the morning, ready for lunch that day.

What is your style of cooking?

Really, my passion is Italian or Mediterranean. Every time I've travelled in that part of the world, we sit down, eat our grilled fish with olive oil and think 'this can't be bettered'. In my restaurant, we don't do fancy food – we don't use tweezers to put things on plates. We like bold flavours and robust food that people can get stuck into. That's the joy of good seafood.

How about your food at home?

It's relaxed – there's no stress in our kitchen. I bake bread every morning, and always have bread fermenting, ready for the next couple of days. The fridge is always full of pickles and cured fish or ragu. I think it's fun to play around with ideas, then vacuum-pack it and put it in the fridge for later. If I'm freezing something, I always vac-pack it first.

What do you do when you're entertaining?

When we have friends round, we have our little bar area for aperitivo, then we can put lots of big salads in the middle of the table. We get the sun on the terrace at about 2.30pm, just in time for

a late lunch. Although I have had the harbour master on the phone about my red heater lights – apparently they're a potential navigational hazard to the fishing boats coming into the harbour!


What gadgets do you have?

I use a Kenwood Chef for mincing, pasta-making or for a quick loaf in the morning. We mince our own meat and always eat the leftovers of a big roast joint. It means you know exactly what's in the mince.

Do you collect cookbooks?

I have a cookery library upstairs. There is a seafood section, an Italian section, French food, wines, restaurant cookbooks, reference books and also a shelf on cookery writing, like Keith Floyd's memoirs. Simon Hopkinson, Jane Grigson and Elizabeth David are my absolute favourites, and I love Chez Panisse.

What's your advice for someone nervous about cooking fish?

Take a piece of foil and put a square of parchment on top. Take your piece of fish – whatever you fancy – then add a little olive oil, roast garlic, salt, rosemary, chilli, a splash of wine. Fold it up and pop in the oven for 10 mins, then just open it up at the table – job done! 

GET THE LOOK



This bright, retro-style Artisan Toaster 4-slices adds a pop of colour to the kitchen counter. Dhs1,995 at Al Ghandi Electronics.

A hurricane lantern, like this Arteriors Home one, dresses up any dining table. Dhs900 at Bloomingdale's Home.



Mitch loves serving big salads to share when friends come over. This Sea breeze melamine salad bowl is perfect, Dhs55 at Lakeland.

SPEND A WEEKEND IN BRIXHAM

Mitch recommends his favourite spots:

- Brixham Trawler Agents runs tours of the commercial fish market, ending with breakfast at [Shipmates café](http://shipmatescafe.co.uk) (englishriviera.co.uk).
- Buy freshly caught fish at [David Walker and Son's shop](http://davidwalkerandson.com) (davidwalkerandson.com).
- The Bay Coffee Company serves lovely cupcakes and expertly brewed coffee.
- A circuit walk (southwestcoastpath.com) connecting the town's two headlands offers panoramic views; head to Guardhouse Café (guardhousecafe.com) after for home-style food.
- Pop into [The Brixham Deli](http://thebrixhamdeli.co.uk) (thebrixhamdeli.co.uk) for a sandwich or a more substantial lunch.
- Stay at [The Berry Head Hotel](http://berryheadhotel.com) (berryheadhotel.com) or the [Quayside Hotel](http://quaysidehotel.co.uk) (quaysidehotel.co.uk), which overlooks the inner harbour.

Food Safari: Iraq

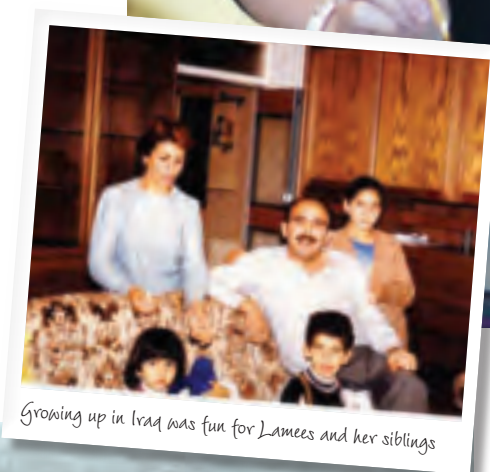
We dip into the UAE's multicultural melting pot to discover a new cuisine from a foodie.

The sad truth is that Iraq is usually in the news for all the wrong reasons, and hardly ever for its gastronomy, but Lamees Attar-Bashi, an Iraqi who has lived in the UAE for six years, tells us that it's one of those cuisines that anyone will instantly love once they try it! "It's a big hit with many Emiratis because of the unique flavours," she says. There couldn't be a better ambassador for Iraqi cuisine than Lamees, who is a TV chef and can be spotted on Abu Dhabi TV and Al Sharqiya, where she cooks traditional Iraqi cuisine. She also has a Facebook page, Lamees's Kitchen, where she shares photos and recipes of Iraqi dishes.

Lamees began cooking at the age of 11, after stumbling upon a children's book which had a lemon cake recipe in it. "I remember not knowing what the word ingredient even meant. My mom talked me through it and helped me bake my first cake. Soon after I baked a cake all by myself – I didn't share it with anyone!" she says. Born in the UK, she moved to Baghdad at the age of ten with her family, where she lived for 16 years. She moved to the UAE six years ago, and now lives with her husband, daughter and son in Abu Dhabi.



Lamees loves showcasing traditional Iraqi cuisine to the world



Growing up in Iraq was fun for Lamees and her siblings



Baghdad is Iraq's capital city

THE COUNTRY

Iraq, a country known for being rich in oil, was historically known as Mesopotamia (a land between rivers, which was the name for the Tigris-Euphrates river system in Western Asia), which was the cradle of an ancient civilisation dating back 5,000 years – until the end of World War I. Its neighbours are Turkey to the north, Iran to the east, Saudi Arabia to the south, and Syria to the west. Iraq is divided into four regions with dramatically different geography, with the lower being the Tigris-Euphrates river system in Western Asia, the upper Tigris-Euphrates valley, the mountains and the hills towards the northeast and the desert in the southwest and west region. The Tigris-Euphrates Valley begins north of the capital, Baghdad, and ends southward to the

head of the Persian Gulf. The country was ruled by the Ottoman Empire from 1534-1704 and then again from 1831-1920, after which it was under British rule. It gained independence in 1932.

Contrary to images of war-torn Iraq we see in the media, life growing up in Baghdad was quite idyllic for Lamees, who lived in an area called Hay Al Jaamia where she remembers everyone being very social and kind. “Everyone lived in villas, there were no buildings or apartments, and it was a very modern area,” she says.

Baghdad rests on both banks of the Tigris River in central Iraq, which allows for fresh fish to be sold in abundance. “Fish was, and still is, sold in shops which have a small pool with sweet water fish swimming around. You can go in and pick the fish you want and have it cleaned and cut to your liking,” says Lamees. Vegetables are an important part of the cuisine, grown mainly in the northern part of the country thanks to favourable climatic conditions – cold and rainy winters (November to April), and dry summers (May to October).

“Vegetables and fruit are usually fresh and natural, and free from chemicals there; tomatoes, for example, are red and full of flavour,” says Lamees. Okra, tomatoes, potatoes, eggplant, carrots and spinach are some of the vegetables that grow in Iraq. Fruits such as figs, apricots, plums, pomegranates, and apples are also grown while dates are grown in the central and southern part of the country, due to the dry desert climate. The rains allow for crops such as chickpeas, lentils, dry broad beans and sugar beets to be grown during winter, in the northern Governorates (the country is split into 19 areas known as governorates) of the country. Rice is a staple and grown everywhere in the country, along with maize crops. Mutton and lamb are widely available at butcher shops.

Over the years, agriculture in Iraq hasn’t suffered too much, despite the years of conflict and in fact, in recent years, availability of imported food such as seafood and Western vegetables in cities like Baghdad has shot up, Lamees tells us.

THE CUISINE

“Meat is a must for every dining table in Iraq,” says Lamees. Having meat as part of a spread is a way of showing generosity, according to Iraqis. Various meats are usually slow-cooked and eaten as part of a stew, with vegetables, rice or as a stuffing in vegetables. “I’m not being biased, but the meat in Iraq is just full of flavour and so tender. My parents always get meat with them when they fly here from home!” she says.

Iraqi cuisine has similarities to Turkish and

Iranian food, but is predominantly mild flavoured with only a few spices being used in most dishes. Iraqis prefer to let the taste of the vegetables and meats shine through, instead of masking it with strong ingredients, unlike some other Arabic diets.

Staples of the wholesome cuisine include stews and slow-cooked meat – there are over 35 different stews – and stuffed vegetable dishes such as dolma, which is also well known in Turkey. Dishes are typically flavoured with salt, cumin, pepper, nutmeg, and similar spices that aren’t pungent or overpowering.

The Iraqis begin the day with a heavy breakfast of bread with broad beans and scrambled egg on top (Tashreeb), or clotted cream with fried puff pastry and sugar syrup (Kahi and Geymer), however the recipes differ in each household. Lunch and dinner usually features a meat or chicken stew, rice, stuffed vegetables and kebabs. Iraqis also have their own version of biryani made with minced meat or chicken. Freshly brewed black tea is consumed in the afternoons and accompanied by baklava, kunafeh, date cake with caramel, and kleicha (date biscuits) either for dessert or as a snack. In fact, it is quite common to go out to tea houses, even if people don’t eat out too much otherwise. Savoury snacks such as flatbread with meat (Laham ajeen) are also popular.

When it comes to eating out, dishes like fresh skewered, spiced fish cooked on a wood-fired BBQ (Samak masgouf) are popular as they are usually only available in restaurants.

THE CULTURE

Home cooking and family gatherings around food are a big part of Iraqi culture, especially for women. “The men were never in the kitchen, it was always my mother, sister and I cooking for hours before guests came over, or baking cakes for special occasions,” Lamees says.

“We also get together a few days before Eid to make Kleicha in big batches – this date biscuit is found in every house over Eid. It’s always a nice time,” she says. Eid breakfast is as important as lunch for Iraqis, although customs differ from household to household. For example, Lamees remembers eating Kahi and Geymer on the first day of Eid, although now she makes Tashreeb for her husband on the first day – a tradition in his household. Weddings and large banquets see a whole roasted sheep on a tray of rice (qouzi).

These might just be some of the dishes she serves up at the Iraqi café she plans to open in Dubai later, but in the meantime, she shares these authentic recipes that you can try at home.



TRY THESE

7 bean soup

SERVES 4 ● PREP 8 HRS (INCLUDING SOAKING BEANS) ● COOK 50 MINS **Easy**

2 onions, cut into small chunks

3 tbsp olive oil

100g chickpeas

100g white beans

100g red kidney beans

100g red lentils

100g moong beans

100g black eyed peas

50g vermicelli noodles

100g rice

750ml to 1l chicken stock

1 tbsp salt

½ tbsp black pepper

1 Soak the chickpeas, black eyed peas, white beans and red kidney beans all together in a big bowl overnight.

2 Heat oil in a pan and fry the onions until slightly crispy. Add all the soaked beans and peas, lentils, and moong beans, followed by the stock, and boil for about 15 mins on medium heat. Add the rice and vermicelli and cook for another 15 mins on medium to low heat. If it starts to dry up, add a little more water while it is boiling. Season with salt and pepper, serve hot. >>



Dolma with meat

SERVES 4 ● PREP 45 MINS ● COOK 1 HR **Easy**

2 medium tomatoes
1 medium zucchini
1 medium eggplant
900g minced meat (should have a bit of fat in it)
100g rice
2 garlic cloves
4 tbsp tomato paste
3 tsp salt
2 tsp lemon salt or pomegranate juice
2-4 pcs beef ribs
4 medium round onions, cut in half
1 medium green pepper
A bunch of chard
450g dried broad beans
Mango pickle and pita bread (optional)

1 Remove the seeds and flesh of the tomatoes, zucchini, and eggplant to make them hollow.
2 Mix together the minced meat, rice, garlic, tomato paste, salt and pomegranate juice and stuff the hollowed out tomatoes, zucchini and eggplant.
3 Place the ribs at the bottom of a large pot and add the onions, chard, green pepper, and stuffed zucchini, eggplant, and tomatoes in a well shape with a hole in the middle. Fill the centre with the broad beans. Cook on high heat for 30 mins, and then on medium for another 30 mins. If the mixture dries a little, add 100ml water and a tsp of lemon salt, tomato paste and oil – the dish should not be dry.
4 When cooked, flip the entire dish onto a large tray and serve with mango pickle and pita bread, if you like.



Kleicha

SERVES 4 ● PREP 2 HRS 45 MINS

● COOK 20 MINS **Easy**

400g flour
1 tsp salt
2 tsp yeast, mixed with ¼ cup of warm water
250g butter, softened
150ml milk
1 egg

FOR THE DATE FILLING

300g seedless dates
4 tbsp butter
2 tsp cardamom

1 Heat oven to 180C.
2 Mix together the flour, salt and the yeast. Rub the butter in and gradually add the milk – mix until it forms a dough. Cover the bowl with a foil and wrap with a warm cloth, set aside for 30 mins.
3 Melt butter in a saucepan and then add the dates and cardamom. Mash with a wooden spoon until it combines. Set aside to cool for 10 mins.
4 Cut the dough in half and place the first half on a non-stick silicon mat (if not available, spread 1 tbsp of olive oil on a hard surface). Roll the dough out into a rectangular shape until it becomes thin – less than ½ cm thickness. Spread the date mixture gently, leaving ½ cm of dough along the sides. Gently press down with a rolling pin to give it a more rectangular shape instead of round. Repeat the same process with the other half of the dough.
5 Cut pieces of the kleicha with a knife and place on a greased baking tray.
6 Whisk the egg and brush onto the kleicha. Bake for 20 mins or until brown and serve warm or store in an air-tight container. **GF**

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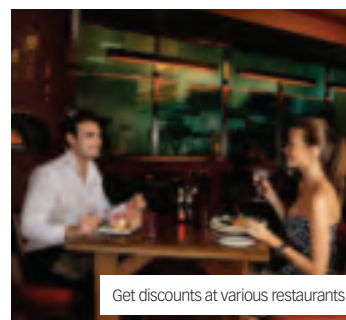
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The beach resort's outlets include Tides, Zaitoun, C View café, Latitude bar and Waves.

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TILAL LIWA HOTEL

Located amidst secluded dunes off the Rub Al Khali desert, the hotel's restaurants are Al Badiya, Layali Bar, and Al Liwan.

Discount: 25% off F&B outlets
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WIN!
A luxe weekend
getaway at **Fairmont**
The Palm,
worth **Dhs8,000**

One lucky winner can enjoy a two- night stay, inclusive of breakfast and a gourmet dinner.

The ideal beachfront destination awaits guests at the luxurious Fairmont The Palm, one of the first hotels you will encounter on the Palm Jumeirah. The hotel offers facilities such as a private beach and pool complex, gym, children's activity centre, and the Willow Stream Spa – perfect for a relaxing spa treatment.


On the culinary front, you can choose from a wide selection of dining options including **Flow kitchen** which offers European, Middle Eastern and Asian cuisine, **Frevo** for the Brazilian churrascaria experience, **Bã restaurant and lounge** for Chinese, **Seagrill on 25 degrees restaurant and lounge** offering Mediterranean specialties and **The Cigar Room** and **Mashrabiya lounge** for a laid-back evening of cocktails and nibbles. Freshly baked breads and pastries are also available for takeaway at Delicacy.

One winner will get to enjoy a two-night stay for two at the Fairmont Gold Room, inclusive of breakfast at the Fairmont Gold Lounge, an exclusive lounge for select guests, and dinner at Seagrill on 25 degrees Restaurant and Lounge.



Log on bbcgoodfoodme.com to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

What cuisine do you get at Seagrill on 25 degrees restaurant and lounge?

Scan this QR code
to go straight to
our website. 



*Terms & conditions apply. Employees of CPI Media Group are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.



TEA WITH GOLD, ANYONE?

When in London, afternoon tea is a must, and if it comes with gold on the side, then it's definitely worth a try! At the St James' courtyard restaurant in St James' Court hotel, afternoon tea is given a decadent makeover at the 24 karat Gold afternoon tea which includes gold leaf jelly, flaked gold strawberry tart, and pure gold champagne. For those with slightly less extravagant tastes, there are other creative teatime options including the Floral tea which comes with chocolate flower pots, rose macarons and orange blossom scones. www.stjamescourthotel.co.uk.

PERFECT PLATES



Who knew an airport could become a gourmet destination rather than a means to getting to one? Uber chef Heston Blumenthal brings his brand of experimental, 4-D dining to Heathrow's new Terminal 2 with *The Perfectionists' Café*, the restaurant version of his journey of recreating British classics on the TV show *In Search of Perfection*. Stop by for a fresh, wood-fired oven pizza, fish and chips with the aromas of a traditional 'chippie' recreated with an atomiser served with the food, or a futuristic liquid nitrogen-frozen ice cream on your next trip to the UK. Find out more on www.theperfectionistscafe.com.

Text: SUDESHNA GHOSH | Photographs: SUPPLIED



TASTE OF THE

world

All the foodie news from around the globe.

Back-to-school in Bali!

Cooking classes on holiday are taken to a whole other level at the newly opened Jimbaran Bay Cooking Academy at Four Seasons Resort Bali. At the professionally equipped cooking school, you can learn to prepare a traditional Indonesian meal, drawn from the different regions of the island, such as Sate rembiga, a beef satay skewer, Bebek betutu, roast duck wrapped in banana leaf, and Es doger, coconut, tapioca pearls and cassava with sweet milk. The half-day sessions start with a market visit, herb-picking from the resort's own garden, and end with a communal meal sampling the creations of the cooking lessons. We can't think of a better way to soak in the Balinese culture! Prices for the cooking sessions start from IDR900,000 (around Dhs280), visit www.fourseasons.com/jimbaranbay for more info and to book.

NOW OPEN FOR RESERVATIONS!

Noma at Mandarin Oriental, Tokyo, which will be operating from January 9-13, when René Redzepi shifts base to Japan, has opened up for online bookings. Dinner packages including one night accommodation, breakfast and a special gift cost JPY 149,500 (around Dhs5,350), visit www.mandarinoriental.com/tokyo/hotel-offers/noma to book. Lunch, which is priced at JPY39,000, can be booked via www.noma.dk/japan. Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!

Beachside wellness



Kicking back in the sun-kissed beaches of the Maldives just got a whole lot healthier with the launch of the new spa menu at the Constance Halaveli resort. Made with fresh, light ingredients, the menu features dishes such as grilled tofu, orange and avocado salad, baked Maldivian seabass, strawberry yoghurt parfait, and a range of nutritious and detoxifying drinks, and is available both at the spa as well as the resort's main restaurants. Visit halaveli.constancehotels.com for more info on the resort.

A gastro-guide to WARSAW

It may not exactly be the first destination that comes to mind when one thinks of gastronomy in Europe, but Poland, with its abundance of produce, and rich culinary traditions entrenched in East European history, throws up a pleasant surprise – or five – when it comes to food. By Sudeshna Ghosh.

There is an ancient tradition in Poland of welcoming guests with bread and salt to show hospitality – the bread symbolises trust, and the salt, endurance. While this custom has been relegated to special occasions like weddings in the present day, the psychology of hospitality remains intact – albeit with culinary offerings slightly more varied than just bread! Although bread does feature heavily in any Polish menu, thanks to the abundant production of a variety of grains, so does a variety of fresh, seasonal produce, and high quality meats – it's not without reason that Polish sausages are known around the world for their unique, subtly spiced flavours!

From the typically Slavic meat-based hearty heavy cuisine of the Middle Ages, to the scarcity-driven communist era frugality, when the Poles had to get inventive with their food, thanks to the rationing, the Polish culinary culture has evolved in a zigzag fashion rather than in a lateral direction to emerge as a fresh, new, sustainability-focused cuisine – with much more to its credit than Pierogi (the quintessentially Polish dumpling dish, stuffed with cheese, meat, vegetables or potatoes), and sausages.

In recent years, chefs and restaurants are drawing on their rich, French- and Italian-

influenced culinary heritage, and reinterpreting them for the modern palate, to make for a foodie scene that is unmistakably exciting and vibrant.

And it all begins here in capital Warsaw. Prettier Krakow may well be the better known tourist destination – and let's face it, grey, modern Warsaw, with its war-ravaged past doesn't exactly impress with its predominantly Stalinist architecture – but it is the destination to head to, to find the urban sophistication, and cutting edge of trends in Poland, both culinary and otherwise.

In Warsaw, there is as much to see from a historical point of view as there is of contemporary culture. There's no missing the legacy the Soviets left behind, whether it's the Palace of Culture & Science – a dark, imposing structure dominating the city's skyline that is sarcastically referred to as Stalin's gift to Poland that no one wanted – the moving war memorial, or the bullet holes that are still evident in some of the historic doorways preserved in the since rebuilt Old Town.

The Old Town, along with the adjacent New Town – only called thus because it was the first settlement outside the medieval walled city that is the original Old Town, but with architecture that's older than most of the rest of the city (confusing, I know!) is a good starting point,

where most of the important historic landmarks, including the Town Hall and Royal Castle have been faithfully rebuilt in the 1980s to now be recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The mainly pedestrian zone, set by the Vistula river, and dotted with squares and lined with cafes, shops and restaurants, is the ideal place to soak in the heritage of Warsaw from the middle ages right up to the 20th century. Alongside all the history, however, there's an up and coming art and design scene in Poland as well, which is worth checking out, whether it's fashion labels like Gocia Baszynka, whose edgy style is making waves across Europe, or places like Soho Factory, a complex of formerly dreary factories in the abandoned Praga district on the right bank, that have been revitalised to turn into an urban cultural district of galleries, boutiques, design and media studios. Soho Factory is also home to interesting restaurants, testament to the new energy being infused into the city's dining scene.

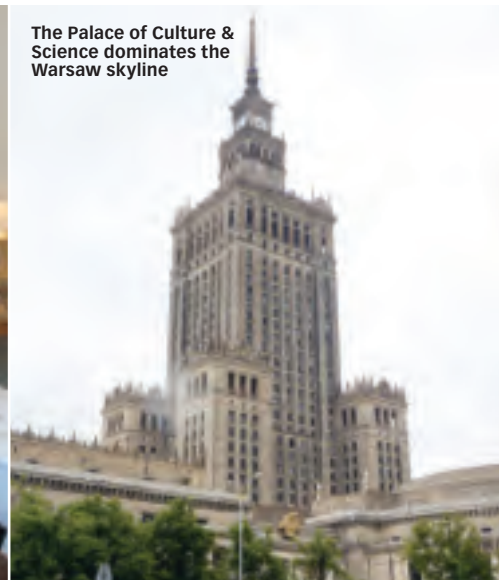
To tap into this, steer away from the tourist traps of costume-wearing 'traditional food-serving' venues where you will find mediocre food, and make like the locals with our insider guide to the top five restaurants where you can truly enjoy contemporary Polish cuisine.

Warsaw's Old Town square





Rozbrat 20 is one of the city's best kept culinary secrets



The Palace of Culture & Science dominates the Warsaw skyline



Watch the chefs in action when dining at Warszawa Wschodnia

Rozbrat 20 Bistro & Restaurant

Tucked away in a quiet riverside suburb, this is a smart bistro typical of the new wave of modern European restaurants taking Warsaw by storm. Inside the intimate space, with black and white photos lining the walls and fresh flowers adding life and colour, the chef serves up a small, French-inspired menu featuring seasonal ingredients – think cream of white vegetable soup with potato foam, guinea fowl with mushrooms, and perch with asparagus. The highly lauded chef, who even has a chocolate fondant dessert named after Australian celebrity chef Neil Perry whom he's friends with, successfully recreates the buzzing vibe of other European capitals with the perfect combination of exclusivity and good food. www.rozbrat20.pl.

Restauracja Dom Polski

Sure to be found on any list of must-visit restaurants in Warsaw, this family-run establishment which recreates the food and atmosphere of 'Poland between the wars' is the ideal place to get a taste of the traditional in a suitably homely setting. Located in a converted house in a wealthy residential district, with several small interconnecting rooms decorated with china cabinets, portraits on the walls, and dressers with memorabilia, and a lovely conservatory, the restaurant is cosy and inviting. The flavours of classic Polish cuisine is recreated in the menu – including family recipes handed down through the generations – with a slightly lighter, healthier twist, and using seasonal ingredients. Whether it's a fermented rye flour soup with mushrooms, roast duck with fruit sauce, or their array of signature desserts which they are known for – don't miss



Warsaw's Old Town has been rebuilt to faithfully represent the city's history

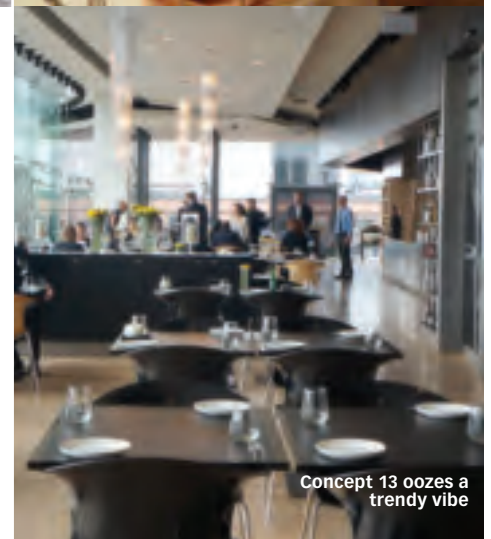


Feel like a guest being welcomed into someone's home when dining at Dom Polski

their dessert trolley, or the tempting display trays placed near the entrance – such as a delicious meringue cake, the food stays true to its roots. Busy with everyone from locals celebrating a special occasion to in-the-know tourists, it's not hard to see why this restaurant is so popular. www.restauracjadompolski.pl.

Restauracja Concept 13

Housed in a luxury mall, Viktat, this über-trendy restaurant with floor-to-ceiling glass windows offering expansive city views, and an open kitchen offering culinary theatre to rival these views, is modern minimalism at its best. With sleek monochromatic and wood interiors, slick staff, and innovative, contemporary cuisine the >>



Concept 13 oozes a trendy vibe

restaurant oozes a hip vibe from every inch. Not one for letting style take over substance, the creations of the Cordon Bleu and London-trained head chef, celebrating seasonal Polish ingredients, particularly vegetables, are delicious. Dishes like lobster bisque with ginger oil, and turbot with cauliflower and tarragon are best enjoyed at lunchtime in the sun-drenched space. www.likusrestauracje.pl.

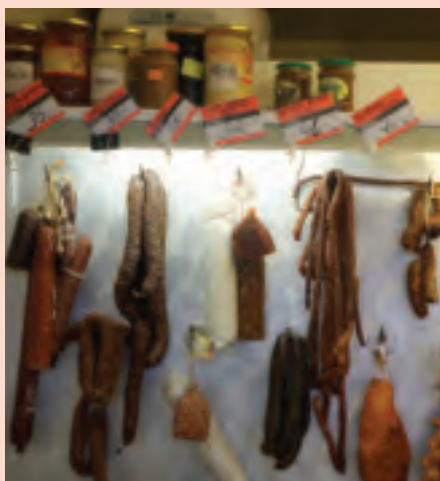
Warszawa Wschodnia

Located in a converted warehouse in the Soho Factory complex, this restaurant opened in 2013 to rave reviews. The oversized loft space featuring industrial-style design with exposed brick walls,

light wood furniture, and a funky grand piano setting the scene for live entertainment, is split into two sections - one side offering more sophisticated food, albeit in a relaxed environment, and the other, open 24 hours, specialising in traditional Polish comfort food. Kitchen theatre takes on a whole new meaning here, with a completely open island-style kitchen being the centerpiece, where you can watch the talented team led by award-winning chef Robert Kendziala create intricately crafted dishes. With a firm focus on fresh, high-quality regional ingredients (the chef enjoys strong relationships with his suppliers, and recognises the importance

MARKET WATCH

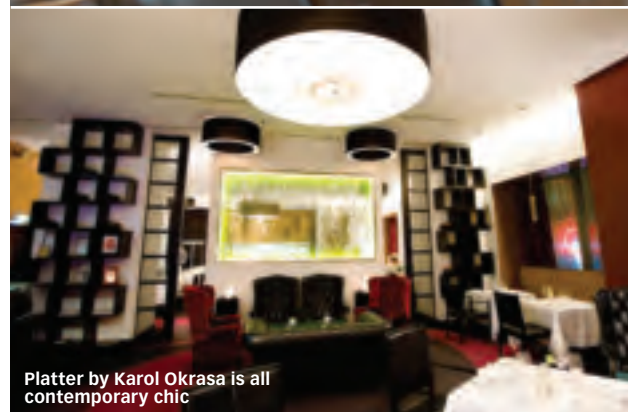
With agriculture being an important part of the Polish economy – Poland is the world's largest exporter of apples, incidentally – you're never too far from fresh, seasonal produce. Don't miss a visit to Hala Mirowska, Warsaw's largest covered market dating back to the 19th century, to get your foodie shopping fill. Skip the supermarket section in favour of the outdoor area to find farmers selling their fruit and vegetables in canopy-covered stalls, as well as bent old ladies selling a few boxes of berries or mushrooms, likely picked from their backyards or nearby forests, plus cured meats and sausages galore!



Warszawa Wschodnia is located in the hip Soho factory district



Karol Okrasa is one of Poland's best known celebrity chefs




Platter by Karol Okrasa is all contemporary chic

of provenance), the food brings back old Polish cooking techniques, and borrows the best from other regions – whether it's Italian burrata or a magret duck from France – to make for a stylish, modern menu. So, whether it's asparagus in butter sauce, chilled beetroot soup (an absolute Polish classic), deer medallions in Armagnac, or roasted duck with apples, depending on the season, you are guaranteed a meal where the ingredients are treated with care and respect, and allowed to shine through. With a culinary school component as well – they have fully equipped cooking stations within the space – they also offer cooking classes for up to 12 people. www.gessler.sohofactory.pl.

Platter by Karol Okrasa

Poland's very own celebrity chef – Karol Okrasa has hosted TV shows, authored cookbooks, and won several awards – runs this Michelin guide-

recommended restaurant in the Intercontinental Hotel, where he brings to life his culinary philosophy of reimagining long-forgotten Polish flavours and traditions in a modern context. Drawing from childhood memories, and giving his dishes a playful twist, Karol treats his food as an art form, which is evident in the beautiful presentation of each course. Whether it's the classic Pierogi given a gourmet makeover with

duck stuffing served with a marjoram emulsion, or a sorrel soup elevated to five-star status with truffle oil; whether it's the ever-popular goose, served here in a too-pretty-to-eat, marinated and smoked form with edible flowers, or local specialty fish zander, ancient grains like buckwheat and millet, you're never too far from Poland's culinary heritage, even if you're enjoying it in sophisticated avatar and setting. www.platter.pl. 



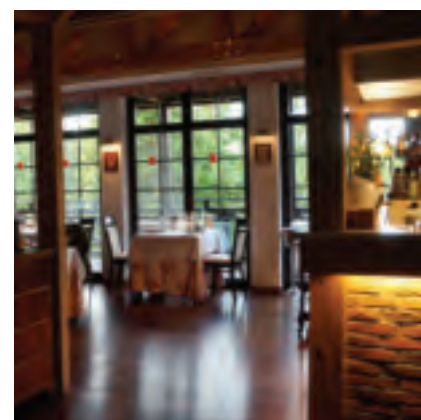
Sweet stuff

Like most of Europe, Poland has a rich heritage of confectionery, with cakes and pastries being an integral part of festive celebrations and even the daily diet. Don't miss these iconic dessert destinations:

- **Blikle** (shown here) is a chain of pastry shops dating back to 1869, designed in the style of grand European cafés of that period, with outlets across the city. Head there to try specialties such as Sernik (cheesecake), Makowiec (rolled poppy seed cake, a Christmas delicacy), Kopytka (doughnuts), and the famous Polish doughnut, Paczek, a hole-free round pastry stuffed with jam, chocolate or cheese. www.blikle.pl.



- **E Wedel**: Poland's largest chocolatier brand, originally founded in 1851, they not only manufacture a variety of candy can chocolate products, but also run a chain of chocolate bars around the city. Worth checking out for their delicious chocolate drinks and innovative desserts. www.wedel.pl.



COUNTRY ESCAPE

When in Warsaw, make time for a short detour from the city into the lovely countryside – the historic town of Olsztyn in Poland's Lake District, a popular weekend destination for Varsovian, is only a few hours' drive away. Take a wander around the Olsztyn Old Town and castle, which, having been spared any bombing in the war, has its original medieval architecture well-preserved. Having been home to Copernicus for several years in the 1400s, the castle is endowed with a rich history. Soak up all the history with a wander around the picturesque town with cobblestone streets, before making your way to the Hotel Spa Dr Irena Eris, a unique wellness resort that is home to Poland's first Slow Food restaurant. Set amidst lush lakeside greenery, the chic resort offers luxury accommodation, expert spa treatments, and delicious, wholesome food at the Restauracja Romantyczna – an intimate, elegant venue offering regional cuisine celebrating ingredients sourced from the West Mazurian Lakeland. Find out more from www.dririenaerisspa.com.

TRAVEL DIARY

GETTING THERE: Emirates Airline offers direct flights between Dubai and Warsaw, it takes around six hours. Ticket prices start from around Dhs3,600, www.emirates.com.

STAYING THERE: The Intercontinental Warszawa is a centrally located hotel offering contemporary five star accommodation. Visit www.warsaw.intercontinental.com.

Competitions

Fabulous prizes, from dining vouchers to event passes, up for grabs.



WIN! A WEEKEND STAY AND BRUNCH AT PARK REGIS KRIS KIN, WORTH DHS3,000.

One lucky winner and their guest can enjoy a one-night city stay-cation in a Superior Suite Room of this hotel located in the heart of Dubai. The winner also gets to indulge at the Friday Munch brunch at Kris with a view, the panoramic view restaurant which offers Pan Asian cuisine.

WIN! DINING VOUCHERS AT FOGUEIRA, RAMADA PLAZA JUMEIRAH BEACH RESIDENCE, WORTH OVER DHS1,700.

Take a dining partner along to try a selection of 15 Brazilian meat cuts, all part of the Brazilian Churrascaria experience. You and your friend can feast on appetisers and unlimited servings of barbecued meat, while watching Samba performances if you go on a Thursday or Friday night.



WIN! PICNIC BRUNCH FOR FOUR AT 3IN1 RESTAURANT, VIDA DOWNTOWN DUBAI, WORTH OVER DHS1,500.

One winner, along with three friends, get to try the unique Urban Picnic brunch on Friday, and relax either indoors, or by the poolside, on a faux grass patch while tucking into gourmet treats. Pick up a basket and fill it with a selection of mouthwatering sandwiches, quiches, pies and salads, before indulging in à la carte mains. An extensive dessert buffet is also on offer to sweeten their palate after.



WIN! THREE DINING VOUCHERS AT NEW YORK STEAKHOUSE, MARRIOTT MARQUIS DOHA CITY CENTRE, WORTH QR1,500.

This elegant American steakhouse is the place to visit for succulent meats, seafood, cocktails and a selection of decadent desserts. Three vouchers are up for grabs, worth QR500 each, at this restaurant located at this newly rebranded hotel.

WIN! BRUNCH FOR TWO AT ANISE, INTERCONTINENTAL DUBAI FESTIVAL CITY, WORTH DHS650.

One winner and a friend can savour seafood delights at the Friday Seafood Brunch. The spacious international restaurant offers an unlimited selection of fresh fish and seafood dishes at the buffet, all of which will tantalise your tastebuds.



WIN! FRIDAY BRUNCH FOR TWO AT MAZINA, THE ADDRESS DOWNTOWN DUBAI, WORTH OVER DHS550.

Take a friend along to the Friday brunch at this hotel, to feast on a selection of salads and appetisers, international favourites, Arabic specialties, and Mongolian delights prepared at live cooking stations. The extensive brunch is complemented by a selection of beverages.

To stand a chance to win these prizes, visit our competitions page on www.bbcgoodfoodme.com, or simply scan this QR code with your mobile to go directly to the website, and answer the simple questions.

*Terms & conditions apply. Employees of CPI Media Group and entrants below 21 years old are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.




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29-year-old **LARA ARISS**, founder of cookery blog Keystomykitchen.com, is based in Beirut, Lebanon. Lara previously worked in the advertising industry, but took a break from the corporate world a few years ago to pursue her dream of mastering French cooking. She attended Le Cordon Bleu in London where she studied French basic cuisine and did a pastry course as well. She's currently busy building up her name as a culinary personality in the region.

My insider tips for Beirut

I love having a light lunch at Dar Bistro and Books, mouthwatering burgers at The Happy Prince, freshly baked thin crust pizzas at Pizza Margherita, and Saturday brunch at the renowned French Bistro, Couqley.

My instant snack fix



Greek yoghurt with orange zest, honey and a handful of granola.

Meet the blogger

Helping you connect to the region's foodie community, one blog post at a time.

About the blog

✳ My kitchen is a playground that I venture into to cook, eat, and unwind. It's the perfect setting for recreation and creativity, for alchemy and adventure. **Keystomykitchen.com** allows me to share what comes out of my kitchen – fun stories, simple ideas, and tested recipes that are lovely yet straightforward, and fine-tuned a hundred times. On my blog, you will find improvised recipes that have materialised with meals, as well as ones that have come from friends, family and cookbooks. I like honest recipes that don't deceive or disappoint. The recipes found here are meant to make your adventures in the kitchen more fun, and you will find everything from cakes, breads, pastries and cookies (I did specialise in pastry!), to salads and roasts – with beautiful professional photography. I also carry stories from my foodie travels on the blog.

“Cooking should be accessible and frank.”

ALL-TIME FAVOURITE RESTAURANT

Ottolenghi in London. I love the freshness of the ingredients they use, as well as the combination of colours and the way they combine all sorts of ingredients together. My favourite dishes there are roasted chicken with thyme, green beans salad with hazelnuts, carrot cake, and their popular caramel and macadamia cheesecake.

“Guilty pleasure”
Nutella – straight from the jar!



TIPS FROM MY KITCHEN

- ✳ Never bake with chocolate that contains lecithin as it ruins the flavour of the chocolate in the dish.
- ✳ Place eggs in a bowl of warm water, if they have been stored in the fridge, before using them.
- ✳ Always rest cheesecake batter in the fridge for a few hours before baking, to let the flavours blend more.

Food is... a source of ageless pleasure and fun. It brings people together, and is the world's common ground.

Spruce up a dish by:

Mixing sweet and savoury flavours. I find the taste of chicken rather bland so I always incorporate dry fruit and honey when cooking with it, and make dishes like roasted chicken with rosewater and prunes.





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